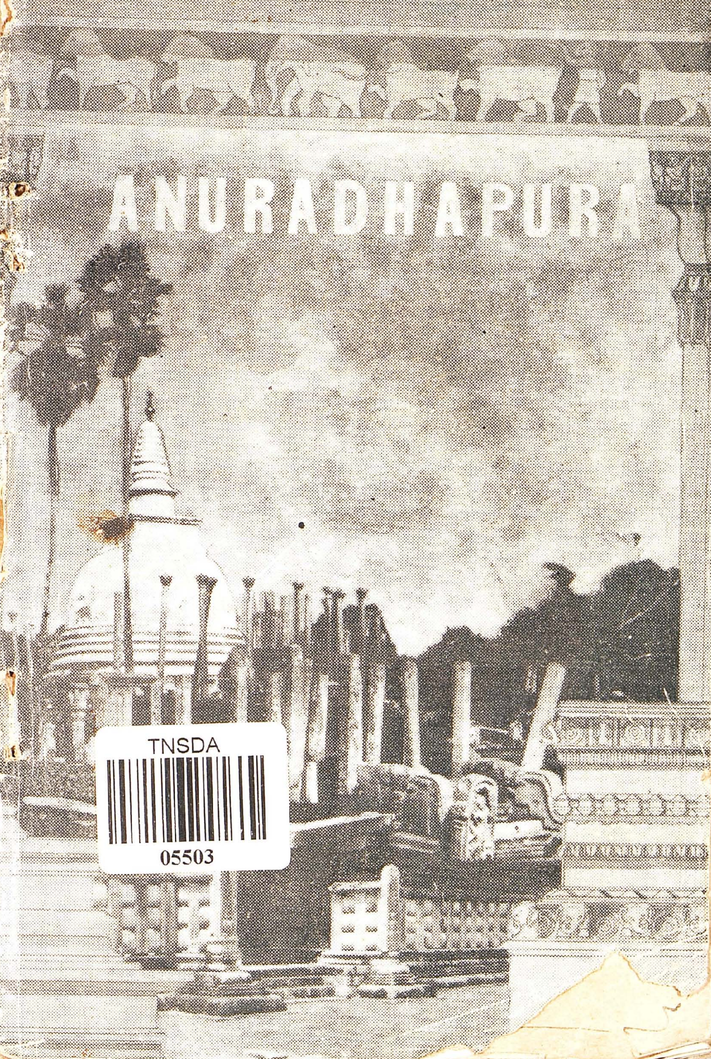

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Guide to : : :
Anuradhapura

by

JOHN M. SENAVERATNA

1949

PREFACE

THIS work, like its companion volume, *Guide to Mihintale*, has been prepared upon the suggestion, and at the request, of Dr. S. Paranavitana, Archæological Commissioner of Ceylon, on behalf of the Ceylon Government.

It is intended primarily for the use and benefit of Tourists and casual visitors who know little or nothing of " the glory that was Anuradhapura ", but are anxious to see and (or) learn something of what remains of the ancient City, one of the greatest of the ancient world and once famed among all civilised peoples, in all lands, for the beauty, the splendour and stupendous character of its monuments.

It is hoped that this work may also prove of some use (if only as an incentive to acquire fuller information) to those of the " home pilgrims " of this country, born and bred within its confines, whose knowledge of the greatness of its past history is still unfortunately vague and meagre, where it is not a perfect blank—the type of people whom Gabriel Harvey had in mind when he wrote his famous Note in Lluyd's *Breviary of Britayne* : " *Nihil turpius quam domi esse peregrinum ; nihil magis pudendum quam ignarum esse suae Patriae*—" Nothing is more dishonourable than to be a pilgrim in one's own home ; nothing more to be ashamed of than to be ignorant of one's own native land ".

Anurādhapura may be a dead city, and its surroundings a wilderness. But even as in the desolate capital there are still points of attraction and sights pleasant to the eye in some of its monuments " yet beauteous in decay " or " majestic though in ruin ", so in the wild wastes round and beyond it the visitor may still see, here and there, scenes of rare beauty and charm unparalleled elsewhere in the Island.

Such, for instance, are the Lakes of Vil Pattuva in Moragolla Vanni, which moved even a sober scholar like the late

2——J. N. 14675–3,005 (11/48)

Mr. H. C. P. Bell, first Archæological Commissioner of Ceylon, to break out into such rhapsody as this : " The calm beauty of these inland lakes is indescribable. The bright blue of the still water, the ring of white sand fringed with grass and forest, mingled greens and browns, the varied bird and animal life— and withal that wondrous hush which pervades and sanctifies nature uninvaded by man's encroachment—

'Oh ! if there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this ! "

I have finally to make acknowledgment of my deep sense of indebtedness to Dr. Paranavitana for much useful advice and many helpful suggestions in the preparation of this work.

JOHN M. SENAVERATNA.

Colombo, September 20, 1947.

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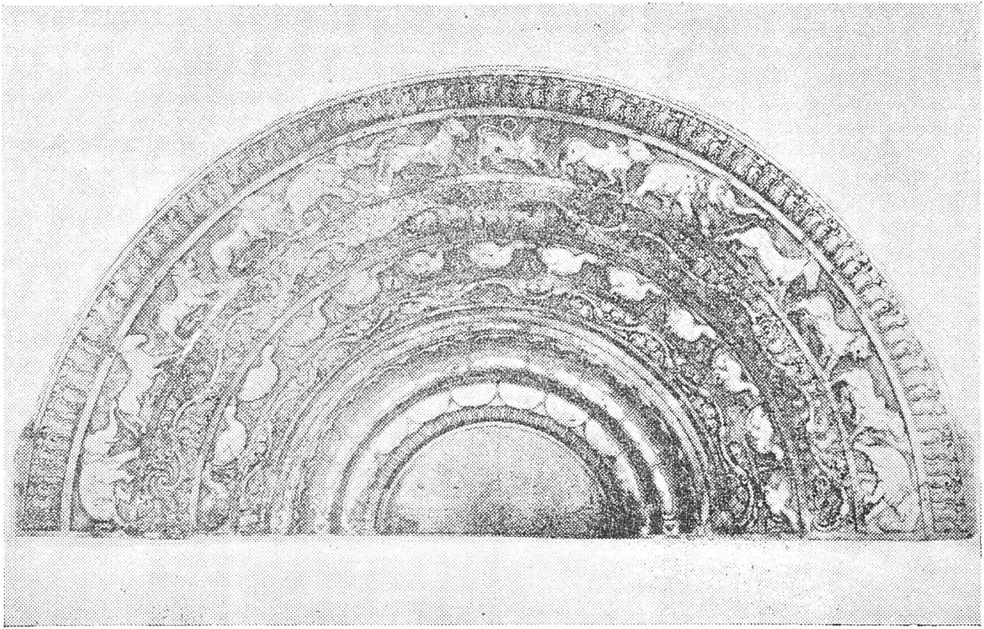


MOONSTONE AT THE "QUEEN'S PAVILION"

SUGGESTED TOURS

The tours indicated below are meant for the guidance, and to suit the convenience, of all classes of vistors anxious to see the ruins—those in a hurry as well as those disposed and able to linger a little longer. Within a radius of a mile from the heart of the modern Town are situated most of the more important monuments and shrines that are worth a visit, and these are all included in the "One Mile Tour" suggested to the visitor whose time for sight-seeing is more or less limited. The other extended Tours suggested are for those who are not so handicapped and who can spare the time to view the restored remains less cursorily and, possibly, more understandingly.

I.—One Mile Tour

Mahāmēghavana (Park)

Sacred Bo Tree

Lovā-mahā-pāya (Brazen Palace)

Mayura Pirivena

Ransimālakaya

Elāla Sohona

"Magul Uyana" (Royal Park)

Isurumuniya

Tisā-väva

Mirisaväṭi Dāgäba

Basavak-kulama

Ruvanväli-sāya

Selacaitya Dāgäba

Nandanavana or Jotivana Park

Thūpārāma Dāgäba

Eastern Dāgäba (miscalled Abhayagiri)

Toluvila Ruins (near Railway Station)

II.—Two Mile Tour

The above and the following besides :—

Vessagiriya

Western Monasteries (Outer Circular Road " Palaces ")

Lankārāma Dāgäba

Abhayagiri or Northern Dāgäba (miscalled the Jetavanārāma)

Toluvila Ruins (beyond Railway Station)

Nuvara-väva

III.—Three Mile Tour

All those included in I. and II. above and the following in addition :—

Pankuliya Monastery

Puliyankulama Monastery

IV.—Four Mile Tour

All those included in I, II and III besides the following :—

Vijayārāma Monastery and

Kiribat Dāgäba

CHAPTER I

Anuradhapura as Capital City

ACCORDING to Buddhist legend, what was and is known as Anurādhapura from about the 5th century before Christ down to our day had been hallowed by the visits of the three previous Buddhas of the present age, Kakusandha, Kōnāgama and Kāsyapa, in whose times, we are told, it was named Abhayapura, Vaddhamāna and Visālānagara, respectively.

Legendary is also the statement in the Sinhalese chronicles that, on the last of the three visits of Gautama Buddha to Lankā, he went to the site which about a century later was to be famed as the Royal City of Anurādhapura (the " Anurogrammon " of Ptolemy's famous map), and that on this occasion he sanctified by his presence eight spots in particular which, under the designation of the Atamasthāna (or " eight sacred sites "), are to-day known, respectively, as Bō-Maḷuva, Lovā-mahā-pāya, Ruvanväli-sāya, Abhayagiri Dāgäba, Thūpārāma Dāgäba, Jētavanārāma Dāgäba, Lankārāma Dāgäba and Mirisavätịya Dāgäba.

It was some 2,385 years ago to-day that Anurādhapura first became the capital city of Lankā. And the Sinhalese ruler who made it his capital in the very first year of his reign was King Paṇḍukābhaya, who ascended the throne in 437 B.C.

It was named Anurādhapura, both because it was founded under the constellation Anurādha, and from the circumstance that the place had served as dwelling to two Anurādhas—a Minister of King Vijaya by that name who was the first to settle there, and Paṇḍukābhaya's great-uncle who had next resided therein.

History gives us an interesting pen-picture of what Anurādhapura was and looked like in those early days of its foundation in the 5th century before Christ.

The King's efforts to beautify the City and to make it habitable were systematic and thorough. He appointed his uncle, Prince Abhaya, as *Nagara-guttika* ("Guardian of the City")—a sort of Lord Mayor. And in order to enable the latter to carry out his duties efficiently, he gave him a large staff of officials and labourers, the latter drawn exclusively from a class of low-caste people who were known as *Caṇḍālas*.

Five hundred of these *Caṇḍālas* were set to the work of cleaning the sewers, 150 were employed to bear the dead, and as many to be watchers in the common cemetery. And since caste rules enacted that these *Caṇḍālas* should live by themselves, away from the haunts of other men, their superiors in birth, Paṇḍukābhaya built for them a village North-west of the common cemetery (which was near the west gate of the City), and a cemetery for themselves, called the Lower Cemetery, North-east of the *Caṇḍāla* village. North of this Lower Cemetery was constructed a line of huts for the huntsmen.

The City, which had four Gates—north, south, east and west—was encircled by a very widely spread rampart—one chronicle estimated it at "16 *gav*" or nearly 50 miles in circumference—which was as solid as it was ornamental. And starting outward from each Gate was laid out a pretty suburb, in which houses and other buildings sprang up with extraordinary rapidity. Near the west gate of the City were located the common or General Cemetery, the place of execution of malefactors, and two buildings which were known respectively, as the Chapel of the Queens of the West and the House of the Great Sacrifice.

One hundred and thirty years later the increased magnificence of the Capital synchronised with the introduction

of Buddhism by Prince Mahinda in the reign of King Devānampiya Tissa (B.C. 307–267) and the planting of the sacred Bo-tree, the oldest historical tree in the world to-day. The whole face of Anurādhapura was transformed by a number of imposing religious monuments and secular buildings and parks, and these added beauty and importance to the City in wondrous fashion.

Notable among the great religious and other monumental works associated with this pious King's reign were the Thūpārāma (said to be the first work of its kind in historic times to be constructed in Ceylon), the Issarasamaṇa Vihāra or Isurumuniya, which included the Vessagiri Vihāra, as also the Tisā-väva.

During the century that followed, two Tamil invasions and Tamil rule for more than half that period arrested the growth of the City to some extent. But with the end of Tamil domination and the simultaneous accession of Duṭugämuṇu (B.C. 161–137), the greatest King of ancient Lankā, Anurādhapura underwent a veritable metamorphosis, notably in the rise of stupendous dāgäbas, like the Mirisaväṭiya and the Ruvanvälisāya, and mighty and splendid buildings like the nine-storeyed Lovā-mahā-pāya or Brazen Palace—"a *pāsāda* like to a palace of the Gods".

A passing but nevertheless interesting glimpse of what a part of Anurādhapura looked like just a few years before Duṭugämuṇu wrested it from the Tamils, is given by that famous Paladin of his, Suranimila, who said, in connection with his first brief visit to the capital, that he "bathed in the Tissa-väva, and, after doing reverence to the sacred Bo Tree and the *Cetiya* in the Thūpārāma, went into the city. And when he had then seen the whole city, bought perfumes in the bazaar, gone forth again by the North Gate and had plucked lotus-blossoms from a lotus field," had returned homewards.

A fuller and largely imaginative picture of what the City and its environments must have been and looked like in those

pre-Christian times is provided by what Smither had to say about it :—

" Anurādhapura was not one city but two, one within the other. And the Royal residences and chief monastic edifices and dāgäbas were enclosed within walls of great strength, and shut in by massive gates, flanked by Watch Towers and Guard Houses. Beyond these limits was the outer city set apart for the lower orders, wherein the business life of the capital was transacted.

" It consisted mainly of one long, wide street, composed of shops for the sale of every description of goods, and these were divided—as usual in Eastern cities—into quarters for the various callings of provision-dealers, drapers, goldsmiths, artisans, and even to the retailers of children's toys, some of which have been found buried beneath the ruins of buildings. On the outskirts of the lesser City were extensive tracks set apart for the growth of innumerable flowers, solely for the decoration of temples and dāgäbas and for the ornamentation of the streets on great Buddhist festal days ".

Many and varied were the vicissitudes which the capital went through during the four centuries that followed. Apart from civil war and a Tamil invasion before the dawn of the Christian era and a Solian invasion about a century later, decay and destruction of some of the more imposing monuments went side by side with the construction of new edifices and structures, religious as well as secular. The magnificent Brazen Palace of Duṭugämuṇu was burnt down and, though rebuilt, lost its original splendour. But there rose up, in King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi's time (B.C. 104–77), a great religious monument, the Abhayagiri, which was destined in time to become what the orthodox fraternity called " the home of heresy " in the land.

Succeeding rulers, however, did each their " bit " to beautify and embellish the capital, and new stately structures,

tanks, great public works and richly-laid out Parks added considerably to its attractions. The most notable contribution in this respect was made by King Vasabha (A.D. 65–109), who among other things built a wall round the city " sixteen *gavs* in circumference ".

The decline of Anurādhapura, however, may be said to have begun in the reign of the last King of the " Great Dynasty ", namely, Mahāsēna (A.D. 275–302), part of whose period of rule is associated with the wicked and wanton destruction (more devastating than that by any foreign invader) of a good many of the monuments that had given the City its great renown during 800 years. To satisfy an insensate heretical monk's hatred against the Orthodox Buddhist Church, ruthlessly were stately structures belonging to that Church demolished and despoiled, and shamelessly did ordained monks of the heretical fraternity themselves assist in the work of destruction and spoliation.

The first to fall was the Mahā Vihāra, including as it did the splendid Brazen Palace with its seven storeys restored by the King's own brother, Jeṭṭha-Tissa, in the preceding reign, followed in turn, one by one, by those beautiful buildings reared up at great expense and by toilsome labour, which stood as monuments of the piety of bygone rulers of Lankā. Some 364 Colleges and great Temples were uprooted and destroyed, say the ancient chronicles, and their sites ploughed and sown with *uňdu*. And the material of the demolished structures went to enrich and adorn the " home of heresy ", the Abhayagiri, which, now splendid in ornament and rich in possessions, stood pre-eminent over all as the greatest and wealthiest monastery in Lankā.

Three important events in the history of Anurādhapura occurred in the century following. The Tooth Relic of the Buddha, the most venerated relic of the Ceylon Buddhists, was brought to Lankā and housed in a splendid Daladā Māligāva built specially for it in the City. Then came two

important visitors to the capital, first the famous commentator, Buddhaghōsa, who rewrote the Sinhalese commentaries on the Buddhist Scriptures in the Pali language and composed the celebrated philosophical work, the *Visuddhimagga*, and then the famous Chinese Pilgrim, Fa Hien.

To Fa Hien, who was in Anurādhapura in 412 A.D., we owe an interesting description of the City as it was and of the scenes he witnessed therein in the 5th century. He says:

"The City is the residence of many Magistrates, grandees and foreign merchants; the mansions beautiful, the public buildings richly adorned, the streets and highways straight and level, and houses for preaching built at every thoroughfare".

According to Tennent's succinct but graphic summary of the Chinese Pilgrim's narrative, Fa Hien says he was assured that the Island contained not less than from 50 to 60,000 ecclesiastics who all ate in common, and of whom from 5 to 6 thousand were supported by the bounty of the King. The sacred Tooth of the Buddha was publicly exposed on sacred days in the capital with gorgeous ceremonies which he recounts, and thence carried in procession to the "Mountains without Fear", the road to which was perfumed and decked with flowers for the occasion. And the festival was concluded by a dramatic representation of events in the life of the Buddha, illustrated by scenery and costumes, with figures of elephants and stage, so delicately coloured as to be undistinguishable from nature.

Fa Hien also speaks of the lofty monuments which were the memorials of the Buddha, and of the gems and gold which adorned his statues at Anurādhapura. Amongst the most surprising of these was a figure in what he calls "blue jasper", inlaid with jewels and other precious materials, and holding in one hand a pearl of inestimable value.

All this was early in the 5th century, but in the middle of it a Pandyan invasion established foreign rule at

Anurādhapura for over quarter of a century, and before its close the capital shifted temporarily to Sīgiriya in the reign of the parricide King Kassapa. But in the reign of his brother Moggallāna who succeeded him, Anurādhapura once again became the capital, and the Hair Relic of the Buddha which was brought to Lankā at the time was magnificently housed in the City.

The 6th and 7th centuries passed without any particularly notable event in the history of the City, except perhaps that in the reign of Aggabodhi II. (A.D. 599–609) he carried out extensive repairs to that great monument, the Thūpārāma, in fact "renewed the whole work of Devānampiyatissa", and that during this period a King of Kalinga fled to Ceylon and lived as a monk in Anurādhapura. But the *Lankā-vistaraya*, a Sinhalese text of unknown date quoted by Tennent, gives us an interesting pen-picture of the capital at that time.

Among other things the author describes "the temples and palaces, whose golden pinnacles glitter in the sky, the streets spanned by arches bearing flags, the side-ways strewn with black sand, and the middle sprinkled with white, and on either side, vessels containing flowers and niches with statues holding lamps".

And he proceeds to add: "There are multitudes of men armed with swords, and bows and arrows, elephants, horses, carts and myriads of people pass and repass, jugglers, dancers and musicians of all nations, with chank shells and other instruments ornamented with gold. The distance from the principal Gate to the South Gate is four *gav*, and the same from the North to the South Gate. The principal streets are Moon Street, Great King Street, Hinguruvak and Mahavāli Streets—the first containing eleven thousand houses, many of them two storeys in height. The smaller streets are innumerable. The Palace has large ranges of buildings, some of them two and three storeys high, and its subterranean apartments are of great extent".

3——J. N. 14675 (11/48)

That a part at least of this picture is not overdrawn will be evident from a reference in the *Leang-Shu*, a Chinese history of the Leang Dynasty, written between A.D. 507–509 which, in its description of the cities of Ceylon at that period, or rather of the period just anterior to it, says : " The houses had upper storeys, the walls were built of brick, and secured by double Gates ". Carriages and chariots are repeatedly mentioned as being driven through Anurādhapura and the other cities, and carts and waggons were accustomed to traverse the interior of the country.

It is difficult to say to-day who or what exactly was the " authority " for the following statistical information. But it is interesting to note here what a 17th-century Portuguese historian, Fernao de Queyroz, had to say (in his *Conquest of Ceylon*) of Anurādhapura presumably of this period. Says de Queyroz, and the passage looks like a paraphrase, if not a quotation, from the 14th century *Saddharmālankāraya* :— " This City grew so much in size that they (?) gave it a circuit of twelve leagues and a length of four, with walls, bastions and towers of brick, wherein were contained 9,000 one-storeyed houses and 90,000 ground-floor houses, 360 Temples of unusual grandeur with monstrous pagodas. In one there was an Idol of metal as large as the Colossus of Rhodes ".

In the closing years of the 7th century, Anurādhapura, for the first time, after over 1,000 years, ceased to be the capital, for a while in the time of Aggaḅodhi IV. (A.D. 673–689), and similarly a century later in the reign of Aggabodhi VII. (A.D. 781–787) who ruled from Poḷonnaruva. But it was for a brief period of six years only ; for his successor, Mahinda II. (A.D. 787–807) made Anurādhapura the capital once again, and it remained as such for a century more at least, till the 10th century, as conclusively demonstrated recently by Dr. Paranavitana.

But its days were numbered already and its pristine glory destined soon to vanish. In the reign of King Sena I. (A.D. 846–866) the Pandyans invaded Ceylon in force, the Tamils resident in the country joined them, and Anurāḍhapura itself was sacked. The ancient chronicler gives a graphic if sad picture of how the glory began to depart from the once magnificent city. Says the *Mahāvaṁsa* :

" The Pandu King took away and despoiled all valuables in the treasure-house of the King, and plundered what there was to plunder in vihāra and town. In the Ratanapāsāda (built by Mahinda II. in the Abhayagiri Vihāra) the golden image of the Master (the Buddha), the two jewels which had been set as eyes in the stone image of the Prince of Sages, likewise the gold plates on the Cetiya in the Thūpārāma, and the golden images here and there in the vihāras—all these he took and made the Island of Lankā deprived of her valuables, leaving the splendid town (Anurādhapura) in a state as if it had been plundered by Yakkhas ".

When peace was made with the Pandyans, Sena returned for a brief while to Anurādhapura. But the glory of the city was now on the wane, and he left for Poḷonnaruva which he thenceforward made his Capital.

Succeeding kings did likewise till the beginning of the 11th century when, for the last time in its long history and for a brief spell of ten years only, Anurādhapura was made the capital by Mahinda V. (A.D. 1001–37). But as the *Mahāvaṁsa* tells us, his abode there during those ten years was " amid difficult circumstances ", particularly since the city was at the time " full of strangers ", that is foreigners.

And when the Cholas came presently, " in the three fraternities and in all Lankā, breaking open the relic-chambers, they carried away many costly images of gold, etc. And while they violently destroyed here and there all the monasteries, like blood-sucking Yakkhas, they took away all the treasures of Lankā ".

Anurādhapura's day was done, its glory had departed, and thenceforward it disappeared from history as a capital. As de Queyroz adds appositely enough in this connection: "As all human prosperity has its limits, and great riches become an incentive to great vices, when this City and Kingdom was most prosperous, then were they ruined entirely, there proceeding a protracted civil war followed by a contagion of smallpox . . . . The ancient city of Anurādhapura was abandoned on account of a protracted pestilence".

The Sinhalese chronicles say nothing of this "protracted pestilence", but it is not an unreasonable or inadequate explanation of the mass exodus of people which left the great capital denuded of its populace, and so made it easier for the creeping jungle to hide it from view in a mighty all-enfolding embrace.

No wonder, then, that four centuries later, even prying eyes failed to see anything of the once great city or even some worthy trace of its colossal remains. Says the Portuguese historian, De Queyroz: "Though they greatly extol the grandeur of their edifices, some little memorial of them is found. Constantine de Sa de Noronha, when General of Ceylon, on the order of the King (of Portugal) sent some people to discover these antiquities, but they did not find at the time any vestige of them, in spite of a march of fifteen days through these forests capable of hiding much greater things".

A fair picture of what Anurādhapura was and looked like in the 17th century is given by Knox, who speaks of the ancient capital as "one of these Ruinous Cities, called Anurodgburro where they say Ninety Kings have Reigned, the Spirits of whom they hold now to be Saints in Glory, having merited it by making Pagoda's and Stone Pillars and Images to the honour of their Gods, whereof there are many yet remaining; which the Chingulayes count very meritorious

to worship, and the next way to Heaven. Near by is a River, by which we came when we made our escape; all along which is abundance of hewed stones, some long for Pillars, some broad for paving. Over this River there have been three Stone Bridges built upon Stone Pillars, but now are fallen down; and the Country all desolate without Inhabitants . . . To Anurodgburro therefore we came, called also Neur Waug. Which is not so much a particular single Town, as a Territory. It is a vast great Plain, the like I never saw in all that Island; in the midst whereof is a lake, which may be a mile over, not natural, but made by art, as other Ponds in the Country, to serve them to water their Corn Grounds. This Plain is encompassed round with Woods, and small Towns among them on every side, inhabited by Malabars, a distinct People from the Chingulayes".

Knox's references to the Sacred Bō Tree and to the activities of worshippers round and about it as well as to the buildings in its immediate neighbourhood are of unusual interest. He says: "I have mentioned the Bogahah Tree before, which in memory of this God they hold Sacred, and perform Sacrifices, and celebrate Religious Meetings under. Under this Tree at some convenient distance about ten or twelve foot at the outmost edge of the Platform, they usually build Booths or Tents; some are made slight only with leaves for the present use, but some are built substantial with hewn Timber and Clay Walls, which stand many years. These Buildings are divided into small Tenements for each particular Family. The whole Town joyns, and each man builds his own Appartment; so that the Building goes quite round like a circle, only one gap is left, which is to pass thro to the Bogahah Tree; and this gap is built over with a kind of Portal. The use of these Buildings is for the entertainment of the Women. Who take great delight to come and see these Ceremonies, clad in their best and richest Apparel. They employ themselves in seeing the Dancers, and the

Juglers do their Tricks ; who afterwards by their importunity will get money of them, or a Ring off their Fingers, or some such matters. Here also they spend their time in eating Betel, and in talking with their Consorts, and shewing their fine Cloths. These Solemnities are always in the Night, the Booths all set round with Lamps ; nor are they ended in one Night, but last three or four, until the Full Moon, which always puts a Period to them ".

To come to modern times, that is, less than a hundred years ago, the mighty City, which had been the proud capital of over a hundred rulers for over thirteen centuries, had not the dignity of looking even like a respectable village. Sir Emerson Tennent says : " We rode through the thick forest, which covers everything with an impervious shade, except where the piety of pilgrims and devotees has caused a space to be cleared round the principal monuments. Here the air is heavy and unwholesome, vegetation is rank, and malaria broods over the waters, as they escape from the broken tanks, one of which, the Abhaya-veva, is the oldest in Ceylon. The solitary city has shrunk into a few scattered huts that scarcely merit the designation of a village ".

That was how the ancient City and Capital disappeared into oblivion. If today the visitor is privileged to see something of the glory that was Anurādhapura of old, to be able from concrete fact to visualise something of the grandeur that gave the City its ancient renown throughout the then civilised world, he owes it in the first instance to one " miracle-worker " in particular, namely, the late Mr. H. C. P. Bell, the first Archæological Commissioner of Ceylon, and then to his four worthy successors in office—E. R. Ayrton, A. M. Hocart, A. H. Longhurst and S. Paranavitana. These five men have, in five decades, re-discovered what lay buried in impenetrable jungle for five hundred years, and have, by their truly wonderful work of excavation, conservation and restoration, succeeded in making Anurādhapura " live " once again in our time.

The "Atamasthana"

1.—Sacred Bo Tree

THE sacred Bō Tree (*Ficus religiosa*) of Anurādhapura—the oldest historical tree in the world, with an authentic history of 2,250 years—stands in the middle of the ancient Mahāmēghavana, the Park or Pleasure Garden gifted to the Priesthood by Devānampiyatissa (B.C. 307–267), and is visible from the road leading from the Railway Station to the Town. It is one of the "Aṭamasthāna" or "Eight Sacred Sites" of Anurādhapura.

"Compared with it (says Tennent) the Oak of Ellerslie is but a sapling, and the Conqueror's Oak in Windsor Forest barely numbers half its years. The yew-trees of Fountains Abbey are believed to have flourished there twelve hundred years ago. The olives in the Garden of Gethsemane were full grown when the Saracens were expelled from Jerusalem. And the cypress of Soma, in Lombardy, is said to have been a tree in the time of Julius Caesar. Yet the Bo Tree is older than the oldest of these by a century, and would almost seem to verify the prophecy pronounced when it was planted, that it would '*flourish and be green for ever.*'"

The story of the Bō Tree may briefly be stated as follows: Shortly after the establishment of Buddhism in Lankā by Mahinda, son of the Emperor Asōka of India, the latter was importuned by the King of Ceylon to send hither the Bhikkhuṇī Sanghamittā (to help in the ordination of Sinhalese Nuns) together with a branch of the great Bō Tree of the Buddha. Asōka acceded to the request.

With all the pomp, circumstance and solemnity of a great religious ceremony, the south branch of the great Bō Tree, under which Gautama had attained Buddhahood, was severed from its place and deposited in a huge golden vase specially made for the purpose. The vase with its tree was then taken on board a ship lying at anchor on the Ganges. And, to serve as "Guardians of the Tree", Asōka appointed a large number of persons, Princes as well as commoners, to whom were handed vessels of gold and silver wherewith to water the Tree during the voyage.

The ship arrived in due course at a port named Jambukola where Devānampiyatissa had spent several days, awaiting the arrival of the Bō Tree. When the ship dropped anchor the King, accompanied by sixteen of the highest nobles of the land, boarded the vessel and together with them bore the Tree with its vase to the shore, where it was temporarily housed in a beautiful Pavilion. For three days the King spent the time in personal guard over the Tree, watering it at regular intervals and seeing to it that the rush of the ever-growing crowd of worshippers did not harm or injure even a single leaf.

On the fourth day the Tree was placed upon a beautiful open car or chariot, and, headed by a mighty procession, a start was made of the journey to the Capital of Anurādhapura. The route from the North Gate of the city right up to Jambukola had been gaily decorated with pandals and arches, garlands of flowers and multi-coloured flags. And the roadway itself was sprinkled with white sand and bestrewn with flowers and their petals.

Along this route came the Bō Tree, followed immediately behind by the King, and temporary halts were made at several places, including the spot where the Pācinārāma ("Eastern Monastery") was afterwards built. In the evening of the

eighth day the procession entered profusely-decorated Anurādhapura by the North gate, and, leaving the City again by the South gate, entered the Mahamēgha Park.

There, on the spot where, after successfully defying the sun and wind and rain of two thousand two hundred and fifty years, it still flourishes today, the Bō Tree was solemnly planted amidst a vast assemblage of people gathered together from all parts of the country. And there " since the ages before Christ, the Tree has been tended, guarded and watered, and surrounded with the perfume of adoration and the atmosphere of prayer ".

2.—*Thuparama Dagaba*

The Dāgāba of the Thūpārāma—another of the Aṭamasthāna—is the first work of its kind to be constructed in Ceylon in historic times. The circumstances of its construction go back, therefore, to the earliest days of the establishment of Buddhism in this Island.

About three months after the arrival of Mahinda in Lankā (B.C. 307), he came down one day from the mountain named Mihintalē, where he had spent the rain-season, and, accompanied by the *Sāmaṇēra* (" novice " or " neophyte ") named Sumana, visited King Devānampiyatissa at the latter's palace at Anurādhapura.

Mahinda spoke to Devānampiyatissa about the Relics of the Buddha, and the King, who confessed that he had not known till then of the death of the Buddha, expressed his great desire to obtain some of these Relics for which, he added, he would build fitting *thūpas* or " monuments ". Of the Relics brought over in due course by Sumana, one was the Collar-bone Relic of the Buddha which, on an appointed day

was exhibited by Mahinda in the Mahamēgha Park, situated between the Eastern gate of the City and Mihintalē Mountain.

The King, who was present with his retinue amid a vast assemblage of people, reverently saluted the Relic which, on being handed over to him, he placed together with the Relic-urn on the back of his State-elephant which was then slowly led out of the Park. The elephant, followed by King, Theras, Ministers, troops and people, entered Anurādhapura by the Eastern gate, and, leaving it again by the Southern gate, proceeded to a spot situated East and lying in the neighbourhood of the House of the Great Sacrifice built by Pandukābhaya of old.

This spot had been selected as the final resting-place of the Collar-bone Relic. But at that time the place was overgrown with flowering plants and creepers. These the King had immediately cleared. Upon the cleared space was straightway raised a pile as high as the State-elephant, lumps of dry clay from the neighbouring dried-up Abhaya-vāva being utilised for putting up the structure. When the pile had been suitably decorated, the King took the Relic from the back of the elephant and solemnly placed it there. Then, leaving the elephant and a number of sentinels on the spot to guard the Relic throughout the night, the King returned to the City.

Without delay, by his orders, a Thūpa for this Relic was built. The original brick-work or pile was allowed to remain standing, but its surface formed the base for a new Relic-chamber. Round about and from this Relic-chamber, after the placing of the Relic inside, the Thūpa was continued knee-high, being finished in the shape of a hemisphere. Not long after its completion, the King founded on the spot a Vihāra or *Arāma*. And since its "Thūpa" had been built previously, the Vihāra was thenceforward known by the name of "Thūpārāma".

A Dāgāba consists essentially of three elements: (1) "Dome", usually hemispherical and ordinarily raised on a cylindrical base, forms the principal part, in the upper portion of which is the Relic-chamber; (2) the second part is a square block of brickwork, now mostly known by the Burmese term "tee", and (3) the "tee" forms the base for the conical spire, called a "*Chatta*" or "parasol" which crowns the whole. The Thūpārāma Dāgāba conforms in all probability to the description above.

Standing nearly 56 feet high, around its base was formed a circular paved courtyard, 164 feet 6 inches in diameter, raised 11 feet 4 inches above the adjoining ground, the ascent to this being made by two sets of stone steps on the East and West sides, each consisting of two flights. This enclosure was supported by a brick retaining-wall. Extremely graceful slender stone pillars with ornamental capitals, but no bases, were fixed in the courtyard in four concentric circles round the Dāgāba. The chamber in which the Relics of the Buddha were placed was formed in the upper part of the dome, and was apparently a small one. No description of its original internal arrangement or decorations has been preserved.

3.—Mir s vatiya Dagaba

The construction by Duṭugämuṇu (B.C. 161–137) of this great Dāgāba was begun practically within the first week of his accession to the Throne and was completed three years later, in B.C. 158, that is, exactly 2,106 years ago today. The circumstances under which it came to be built on the spot where it stands are briefly as follows:—

Duṭugämuṇu had a spear, in a receptacle of which a Relic of the Buddha had been placed. This "Relic-Spear" was a memorial of his battle days—it had constantly been carried before him as a Royal Standard throughout his campaign against the Tamils. When the week of his Coronation festival was over, Duṭugämuṇu, attended by his Ministers

and members of the Royal Household, drove in state to the Tisā-väva for a great water-fête which had been arranged to be held there, the bearers of the "Relic-Spear" heading the procession.

These halted at a spot just North of the Tisā-väva and, planting the Spear on the ground where they stood, awaited the time of their Royal Master's return from the water-sports. When Duṭugämuṇu started on the return journey, the Spear-bearers were directed to precede him as usual, but these men found difficulty in dislodging the Spear from the ground. The reverent soldiers, making no further attempt to remove the Spear which they knew contained a Relic of the Buddha, knelt down and placed offerings of flowers round about it.

Duṭugämuṇu, apprised of what had happened, made haste to make his own offerings at the spot. The King's example was followed by all the members of his retinue. The result was that a goodly heap of offerings of various kinds—from simple flowers to costly articles of adornment, such as jewellery—soon marked the place. As the dusk gathered, Duṭugämuṇu placed sentinels round it and returned to his palace. The very next day he gave orders for the building on the spot, not only of a Dāgäba which would enclose the Spear, but also a Vihāra surrounding the Thūpa.

Upon its completion within three years the King, at a solemn ceremony, gifted the Mirisaväṭiya Vihāra to the Brotherhood of Monks. After his death Mirisaväṭiya was neglected and fell into ruin till Prince Kassapa, in the 7th century, did something to restore it. Two hundred years later King Kassapa V. (A.D. 929–939) rebuilt it and "made it over at the celebration of a festival to the bhikkhus sprung from the Thera School" (*Mah.*). Succeeding rulers, however, with a few exceptions here and there, did nothing even to conserve the stately buildings, whose ruin became complete with the shifting of the capital to Poḷonnaruva and elsewhere.

In our own times it was not till 1901 that a commencement was made by Bell with the excavation of the ruins, and what is to be seen of them today, after conservation and such restoration as has been possible, is partly his work and partly that of his successors in office. Some idea of the enormity of this work may be formed from the fact that the whole space covered by the Mirisavāṭiya ruins was some fifty acres in extent. The ruins around the Dāgāba numbered about a hundred, and these offered no special difficulty in unearthing, except where they approached the Dāgāba itself closely.

Here, however, the four cardinal *Maṇḍapa* or "porticoes" to the Dāgāba, the revetment walls of its quadrangle, and the *Mura-geval* or "entrance porches" to the several off-lying Monasteries, lay buried deep under heavy banks of spoil, recklessly piled up outside the inner paved *maluva*, ("platform") in the course of work connected with a previously attempted restoration of the Dāgāba, with funds supplied to the Ceylon Government by a former King of Siam.

4.—The "Lovamaha-paya" or Brazen Palace

One year after the gifting of the Mirisavāṭiya Vihāra to the brotherhood of monks, it was reported to King Duṭugämuṇu that a gold plate had been discovered in a chest at the 'Royal' Palace. Upon examination, the plate was found to contain an inscription of Devānampiyatissa's time, recording a prophecy by Mahinda Thera that, within two centuries of that King's reign, there would arise a ruler of Lankā who would glorify religion by the construction of mighty and splendid buildings.

Duṭugämuṇu assumed that this prophecy conveyed, as it were, a message to himself. And he resolved to build for the *Sangha*, *i.e.*, the Priesthood, another structure, of a character different from the Mirisavāṭiya Vihāra and on a more magnificent scale. Swift upon this new resolve, Duṭugämuṇu arranged a gathering of the monks in the

beautiful Mahāmēgha Park, and there he addressed them thus : " I will build for you a *pāsāda* (palace) like to a palace of the Gods ".

The work was taken in hand exactly two thousand one hundred and four years ago, that is, in B.C. 156, two years after the completion of the Mirisavāṭiya Vihāra, and many thousands were employed in the undertaking. From the outset Duṭugämuṇu was determined that the whole merit of the work should be his, and his alone, by paying for the labour himself. He had it proclaimed : " *No work is to be done here without reward* ", and every workman had his labour appraised and wages paid accordingly.

For the payment of these wages in a manner convenient to the labourers themselves, large sums of money—800,000 gold pieces, according to one chronicle,—were deposited in charge of pay-masters near each of the four gates of the City. Here, too, were placed thousands of bundles of garments and many pitchers filled with ball-sugar, oil, sugar-dust and honey, for the use of the workmen.

In six years, that is, in B.C. 150, the work was over. And so wonderful was the magnificence and beauty of the completed structure that, it is said, *many could scarcely believe it had been fashioned by human hands.* Even the ancient priestly chronicler of the *Mahāvaṁsa*, not accustomed to lavish praise on material things, was moved to eloquent and picturesque language in his description of the splendid and stately building. For this is what he says :

" The *pāsāda* (" palace ") was four-sided, measuring on each side a hundred cubits (150 feet), and as much in height. In this most beautiful of palaces there were nine storeys, and in each storey a hundred window-chambers. All the chambers were overlaid with silver, and their coral *vedikās* (*i.e.*, parapet-balustrades to the windows) were adorned with manifold precious stones ; the *vedikās* were surrounded with

rows of little silver bells and lotus flowers gay with various gems.

" A thousand well-arranged chambers were in the *pāsāda* (" palace "), overlaid with various gems and adorned with windows. Costly beds and chairs, according to rank, and carpets and coverlets of great price were spread about. Even the rinsing-vessel and the ladle belonging thereto were of gold. What need then to speak of the other utensils in the palace ? "

But that was not all. Birani's gem-palace—the model for the present structure—had in the middle of the building a beautiful Pavilion, and a similar gem-Pavilion enhanced the beauty and splendour of this new Palace of Duṭugämuṇu's. It was adorned with pillars consisting of precious stones, on which were figures of lions, tigers, &c., and shapes of " *dēvatās*" " deities " ; a border of pearl network ran round the edge of the Pavilion, and thereon was a coral *vedikā* of the kind described above.

Within the Pavilion, gaily adorned with the seven gems, stood a shining Throne of Ivory with a seat of mountain-crystal. In the ivory back was fashioned a sun of gold, a moon of silver, and stars of pearls. White lotus-blossoms made of various gems were artistically placed here and there and scenes from the " *Jātakas* " (Birth-stories of the Buddha) were depicted within a festoon of gold.

On this beautiful Throne, covered with costly cushions, was placed a gleaming fan of ivory. A white parasol with a coral foot, resting on mountain-crystal and having a silver staff, shone forth over the Throne. On it, depicted in the seven gems, were the eight auspicious figures (viz., the lion, bull, elephant, water-pitcher, fan, standard, conch-shell and lamp) as well as rows of figures of beasts with jewels and pearls in between.

Rows of little silver bells were hung upon the edge of the parasol. No wonder the chronicler adds that " palace,

parasol, throne and pavilion were beyond price". The whole structure was surrounded by a beautiful enclosure and provided with four gateways, one at each cardinal point.

Such was the Palace which Duṭugāmuṇu built as a labour of love and which, from the circumstance that it was covered over with plates of copper, came to be called the Brazen Palace (Pali : "*Loha-pāsāda* : Sinhalese : *Lovā-mahā-pāya.*").

Soon after its completion there was held, just as in the case of the Mirisavāṭiya Vihāra, a solemn consecration-festival at which, in addition to vast numbers of the lay people, there were present a great gathering of the brotherhood of monks. These latter, according to their rank and degree of learning or sanctity, were accommodated in the various storeys of the Palace.

Thus, the bhikkhus who were yet "simple folk" stood in the first storey, those learned in the "*Tipiṭaka*" (or Sacred Scriptures of Religion) on the second, and so on, till all the nine storeys were filled, the holiest ascetics being placed in the topmost storey.

In the midst of this assembly and in sight of all, Duṭugämuṇu poured forth the ceremonial "Water of Donation" and gifted the splendid Lovā-mahā-pāya to the brotherhood of monks. Moreover, he commanded, as on the previous occasion at Mirisavāṭiya, a lavish gift of alms for a week. This order was carried out unstintingly and regardless of cost. The almsgiving was on the same magnificent scale as that on which the palace was designed and constructed.

The work of destruction was soon to begin, however. Fifteen years later (B.C. 135), in the reign of Duṭugämuṇu's brother, Saddhātissa, the Brazen Palace accidentally caught fire from a lamp and was burnt to the ground. The event was looked upon as a national calamity, and representations were made to the King, through the ministers, that he should build it anew, with the assistance of the many thousands

of people who gladly volunteered to render service without payment.

The King was only too pleased to utilise the proferred labour in order to rebuild a structure which was at once a magnificent ornament to his capital and a striking memorial to his dead brother, Duṭugämuṇu. The result was that, in a very short time, there arose out of the ashes of the building a new Brazen Palace not less splendid than the former. The new Lovā-mahā-pāya, however, was only seven storeys high, *i.e.*, it had two storeys less than the building of Duṭugämuṇu.

Today only a few pillars, are the only relics which the hand of Time and the more ruthless hand of the invader and the vandal have left to us of that magnificent structure of ancient Lankā, whose peerless beauty and dazzling splendour made it difficult for those of our forefathers who saw it in its original glory to believe that it had been " fashioned by human hands ".

5.—Ruvanvali-saya or Mahathupa

The Great Thūpa or Ruvanväli-sāya was the earliest and greatest of the greater Dāgäbas of Anurādhapura. The circumstances of its construction testify more eloquently than anything else to the religious fervour and zeal of that greatest king of ancient Lankā, Duṭugämuṇu.

In B.C. 149, when entering the City in connection with a " ceremony of gifts " in honour of the sacred Bō Tree, Duṭugāmuṇu happened to see the pillar of stone set up by his predecessor, Devānampiyatissa, and, being reminded of the tradition associated with this stone, he expressed his intention without delay to build a mighty Thūpa upon the spot. He was determined, of course, that the people should not be taxed in this connection, and he was equally determined that the Thūpa should be built. But how was he to do the one without the other ?

4——J. N. 14675 (11/48)

The Mirisavāṭiya Vihāra, and then the Brazen Palace, had impoverished his resources, and the kind of building he now contemplated would require even more money than he had spent on those two structures. The resolution to which he came finally was to start collecting the necessary material slowly, even if the process took a long time, as he was extremely anxious to avoid oppressively burdening the poor.

But a series of fortunate and opportune discoveries from time to time—of bricks, precious stones, nuggets of gold, copper, pearls and silver—considerably lightened his task and obviated the necessity for any levy on the people. At the end of five years, Duṭugämuṇu found himself in a position to begin the undertaking, and to this end he now gave orders. Some of the necessary materials had to be obtained from outside the Island—from India—and thither he sent men for the purpose. Meanwhile, he made all local preparations, so as to be ready to start the work on an auspicious day and to proceed with it uninterruptedly thenceforward.

On the full moon day of Vesak, in B.C. 144, Duṭugämuṇu began in real earnest the work of the Great Thūpa. The stone-pillar, set up of old by Devānampiyatissa, was removed, and the place for the Thūpa was dug out to a depth of seven cubits in order to make it firm in every way. Round stones, which Duṭugämuṇu's soldiers had brought to the spot, were then broken with hammers, and, in order to make the ground firmer, the crushed stone was stamped down by great elephants whose feet were bound with leather.

A kind of clay, which, because of its fineness, is called "butter-clay" and which had been brought there from the neighbourhood of the Ganges, was spread over the layer of stones, and bricks were laid over the clay. Over these bricks came a rough cement and over this cinnabar.

Over the cinnabar was placed a network of iron, and over this sweet-scented "*marumba*", which had been brought

there by "*sāmaṇēras*" from the Himālayās. Over this "*marumba*", by Duṭugämuṇu's order, was laid mountain-crystal, and over the layer of mountain-crystal he had stones spread, the "butter-clay" serving as cement everywhere throughout the work.

Then, over the stones, came a sheet of copper, seven inches thick, with resin of the "*kapittha*" tree (*Feronia elephantum*) dissolved in sweetened water, that is, water of the small red coconut. And over this, with arsenic dissolved in sesamum oil, Duṭugämuṇu laid a sheet of silver seven inches thick. To put it briefly, the ground for the foundation-stone was prepared as follows :—

Sheet of Silver (*topmost layer*)
Sheet of Copper
Stones
Mountain-Crystal
Sweet-Scented Marumba
Network of Iron
Cinnabar
Rough Cement
Bricks
Butter-Clay
Crushed Stones (*bottom layer*)

In due course, when the work of preparing the spot where the great Thūpa was to be built was completed, came the solemn laying of the Foundation Stone in the presence of a mighty assemblage, which included the chief monks of the great Vihāras and monasteries in India. Thereafter, a few days before the work on the Mahāthūpa began in real earnest, Duṭugämuṇu had it proclaimed by beat of tom-tom : "Work shall not be done here without wages".

He was anxious that the merit of the whole undertaking should be his, and his alone ; and he gave particular directions that no man's labour was to be utilized without recompense of some kind or other.

Accordingly, at each of the four gates of the City, he had a number of temporary buildings put up in which were stored not only vast sums of money for the payment of wages, but also articles of clothing, different kinds of ornaments, solid and liquid foods, drinks, sweet-smelling flowers, sugar, &c., for the use of the workmen. He also provided the five kinds of mouth perfumes, so that the men might perform their labour round about the Thūpa in an atmosphere of fragrance, unpolluted by foul breath or evil smell.

When, in due course the work on the Mahāthūpa had made considerable progress, the time arrived for the construction of that part of the Cetiya known as the Relic-Chamber. It was intended to use in this connection certain fat-coloured stones—that is, stones of the golden or cream colour of fat—which were to be found only in the land of the Northern Kurus, a people living near the Himālayā mountains.

Accordingly, two *Sāmaṇeras*, named Uttara and Sumana, were despatched there for the purpose, and these brought back six massive stones, each eight inches thick, which are described as being "bright as the Sun and like to *ganthi* (*Pentapetes phoenicea*) blossoms". One of these stones was laid on the flower-terrace in the middle of the Relic-Chamber, four were disposed on the four sides in the fashion of a chest, and the remaining one was kept apart, on the East side, to serve afterwards as a lid for the chest-like receptacle.

In the midst of the Relic-Chamber Duṭugämuṇu placed a priceless and dazzlingly beautiful five-branched Bō Tree made of jewels. The root, made of coral, rested on sapphire. The stem, made of perfectly pure silver, was adorned with leaves made of gems and had withered leaves, and fruits of gold and young shoots made of coral. The *aṭṭha mangalikāni* or "eight auspicious figures"—the lion, bull, elephant, water-pitcher, fan, standard, conch shell and lamp—were on the stem, as well as festoons of flowers and beautiful rows of four-footed beasts and rows of sacred geese.

Around the Bō Tree ran a *vēdikā* made of all manner of jewels, the pavement within being made of pearls of the size of great myrobalan fruits. At the foot of the Bō Tree were placed rows of vases, some empty and some filled with flowers. These vases were made of all kinds of jewels and filled with four kinds of fragrant water. East of the Bō Tree, inside the Relic-Chamber, was erected a costly throne on which was placed a shining golden image of the seated Buddha.

The body and members of this image were appropriately made of radiantly beautiful jewels of different colours. Thus the finger-nails and the whites of the eyes were made of mountain crystal, the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and the lips were of red coral, the eyebrows and pupils with sapphires ; the teeth with diamonds, and so on, the harmony of colour being thus maintained throughout.

Seven other thrones, similarly beautiful and not less costly, were erected facing the other seven regions of the heavens. In order that the Bō Tree should be at the head, there was placed a priceless couch adorned with jewels of every kind. It represented the death-bed of the Buddha and was intended to serve as the immediate receptacle for the relics which were eventually to be deposited within the Relic-Chamber.

In due time, with imposing ceremonial, was held the Festival of the enshrinement of the relics, and on the lid formed of the fat-coloured stones with which the Relic-Chamber was closed up was an inscription which declared :—

The flowers here shall not wither,
These perfumes shall not dry up,
The lamps shall not be extinguished,
Nothing whatsoever shall perish,
The six fat-coloured stones,
Shall hold together for evermore.

The stones have apparently "held together" for over two thousand years to-day, and may still even to the end of time, unless they are disturbed by vandals who dig, sometimes for spoliation, but more often as in our day "for renovation", according to their ghastly "lights".

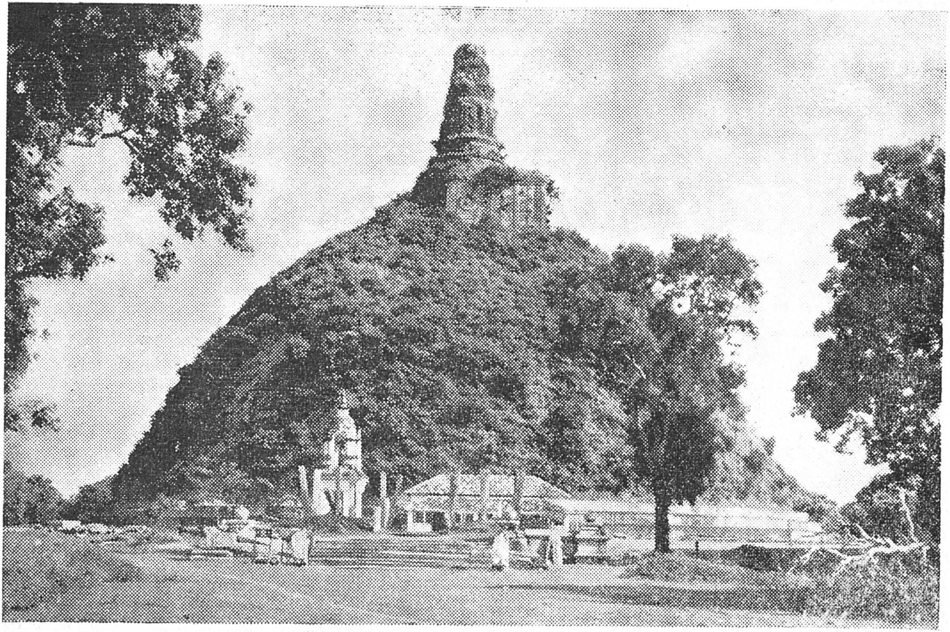
6.—Abhayagiri Dagaba

[*What, by a curious mistake, is still popularly called and known as the "Abhayagiri" is, in reality, the "Jētavanārāma" or Eastern Dāgäba. The real "Abhayagiri", similarly mis-called the "Jētavanārāma", is the Northern Dāgäba. Tradition appears to have confounded one name with the other.*]

Just a hundred years or so before Christ was born, the Sinhalese King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya (B.C. 104–77) was fleeing from the scene of a battle (Battle of Kolambahālaka) in which he had been defeated by the Tamils. In his car or chariot were his two Queens—Anulā Dēvī and Sōmā Dēvī—and his two sons, the princes Mahācūla and Mahānāga. Soon he realised that the chariot, so heavily over-loaded, could not make much rapid progress. And delay on the road meant danger to all.

Sōmā Dēvī, his second Queen, guessed his thought. And, in order to lighten the car, she forthwith insisted on being left behind. The King reluctantly agreed. For Anulā Dēvī, the other Queen, was in delicate health, and the two Princes were too young to be left behind. Accordingly the King allowed Sōmā Dēvī to alight from the car. And, handing her his splendid diadem-jewel for safe-keeping, he drove off.

The place from which he started on his flight was near the gate of the Titthārāma, which King Paṇḍukābhaya of old had built for the use of certain naked ascetics of his day. As Valagambāhu sped away, a Nigaṇṭha or ascetic named Giri saw him and cried loudly: "The great black Sinhalese is fleeing". When the King heard the words, he made a



ABHAYAGIRI OR NORTHERN DAGABA

mental vow that, if and when his hope was realised and he was restored to power some day, he would build a Vihāra on the spot.

Fifteen years later, in B.C. 89, when that hope was realised and he was back on the throne, he redeemed his vow. He destroyed the *ārāma* of the Nigaṇṭhas, and built on its site a Vihāra with twelve cells. It received the name of Abhayagiri—" Abhaya " being a part of the King's name, and " giri " from the circumstance that the Vihāra was built on the place of the *ārāma* of the Nigantha named " Giri ". The Vihāra, when complete, was given by the King to an old friend of the days of his exile, the Thera named Mahatissa of Kupikkala.

Within a year, viz., in B.C. 88, there occurred an incident which was fraught with grave consequences to Buddhism—the beginning of a schism, the first of its kind in Lankā after the establishment of that religion over two hundred years previously. The High Priest, Mahatissa, who had received the Abhayagiri Vihāra but was actually resident elsewhere, " living in domestic intercourse ", in breach of the rules of retirement strictly enjoined upon monks, was, at the instance of the priestly authorities of the Mahavihāra—the custodians, as it were, of Buddhism in Lankā—expelled from the Order.

One of his disciples, a Thera named Bahalamassutissa, who presumed to speak in defence, was thereupon himself expelled from the Order. Burning with anger at this action by the Tribunal of Monks, Bahalamassutissa Thera, accompanied by about 500 monks who were in sympathy with him, departed for the Abhayagiri Vihāra and took up his abode there. Forming thus a separate faction, which refused to accept or recognise the authority of the Mahavihāra, they lived thenceforward as a community distinct from the Thēriya Nikāya, which stood for what may be described as Orthodox Buddhism in Lankā.

Thenceforward Abhayagiri Vihāra became the "home of heresy" in Lankā, so much so that, in the reign of Gōṭhābhaya (A.D. 252), that King was constrained not only publicly to burn the books embodying their "heretical" doctrines, but even to pick out sixty of the chief monks of the Abhayagiri, brand them with marks on the body and drive them out of the country. The day came, however, not long after, when this same King Gōṭhābhaya was won over to the side of the "heretics" by a monk named Sanghamitta, who had come here from India and taken up residence at the Abhayagiri.

It was the first time in Lankā, after the introduction of Buddhism 558 years previously, that a reigning Sinhalese sovereign had definitely and publicly taken the side of a "heretical" sect in opposition, to the Orthodox Church. And when some twenty years later Gōṭhābhaya's younger son, Mahāsēna (whose tuition had been entrusted to this same Sanghamitta Thēra) was on the throne, Sanghamitta, now at the zenith of his power, seized in the name of the King the Vihāra and monasteries of the Orthodox Church and appropriated them to the use of the "heretics" of whom he was the leader.

Some 364 Colleges and Great Temples were uprooted and destroyed, say the ancient chronicles, and their sites ploughed and sown with "*uňdu*" (*Phaseolus radiatus*). And the material of the demolished Mahāvihāra went to enrich and adorn the Abhayagiri which, now splendid in ornament and rich in possessions, stood pre-eminent over all as the greatest and wealthiest monastery in Lankā. It was only for a time, however Mahāsena's indignant Queen had the wicked monk murdered without delay. By the 11th century, the splendour of its ornamentation was a thing of the past, and its noble pile of buildings practically a ruin.

When restored by Parākramabāhu I. (A.D. 1164–1197), the Abhayagiri Thūpa was 140 cubits in height. In 1875 it

measured 231 feet above the level of the platform. The diameter of its base is about 307 feet. The " tee " and pinnacle were partially restored by prison labour in 1890. During the Archæological Survey excavations in 1892, when among other things a *Piḷima-gē* (" image-house ") was dug up, a strange find was made at this shrine—crystal eyes (with pupils stained blue or black), once set in large stone images of the Buddha, and crystal *Karaňḍu* (" relic-caskets "), the abandoned trove of some sacrilegious vandal.

7.—*Lankarama Dagaba*

The Laṅkārāma is, like the Abhayagiri, connected with the name of that great ruler of ancient Ceylon, King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, popularly known as Valagambāhu.

It has already been described how Valagambāhu, fleeing from the scene of the Battle of Kolambahālaka (B.C. 104), heard the words—" The great black Sinhalese is fleeing "—uttered by the naked ascetic Giri ; and how thereupon he made a mental vow that, if and when he was restored to power some day, he would build a Vihāra (the later Abhayagiri) on the spot.

Thence the King, continuing his flight, entered the Vessagiri forest, and here the Royal fugitive met the Thēra Mahatissa of Kupikkala Vihāra. The latter had with him at the moment some food he had received as alms earlier in the day. But since religion forbade a bhikkhu to share such alms-food with a layman before he himself had eaten of it, he first ate of the food and then offered some to the King and his companions.

Valagambāhu and the others, who were famishing with hunger after their flight, gladly ate the proferred repast. Then, in order to testify his gratitude in a practical manner, the King broke a *kētaka* (*Pandanus odoratissimus*) leaf from its stalk in the absence of other material, and, recording upon it the nature of the assistance rendered to him that day, he allotted lands to the Thēra's Vihāra for the use of the Brotherhood resident there.

When it was safe to resume their flight, the King and his companions left the Vessagiri forest and journeyed cautiously to Silāsobbhakandaka (*Sinh.* Galhebakaḍa), where they sojourned for a short time. This was a place about a mile north of the Ruvanvälisāya. Fifteen years later, when Valagambāhu was restored to his throne, he, as the *Mahāvaṃsa* declares, " founded upon a lofty spot the Cetiya called Silāsobbhakandaka " (Ch. 33, v. 87), and it received this name in remembrance of the place where he had found refuge in the circumstances narrated above.

Parker (in his *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 311), claims this title of " Silāsobbhakandaka " for the Lankārāma Dāgäba, and his identification has been accepted by Professor Geiger. Why and when the original name was changed to Laṅkārāma is a problem which yet remains to be solved.

Parker thought it possible that the original shape of the Lankārāma Dāgäba differed from that of nearly all the other early Dāgäbas in Ceylon, but resembled some early Indian works. " In its present state the dome is a segment of a hemisphere 38 feet wide at the point where it leaves the upper cylinder of the three on which it rests, above which it rises 15 feet to the tee. This cylinder, 4 feet high, is no wider than the dome, and thus does not form a ledge round it as in the other early works, but is in reality a continuation of the dome, with a vertical side ". The height of the Dāgäba was found by Mr. Smither to be 33 feet 7 in., and he thought it might have been more than 50 feet when complete.

Like the Thūpārāma Dāgäba (as also the Ambatthala Dāgäba at Mihintalē), the Lankārāma Dāgäba is surrounded by disengaged thin graceful monolithic pillars, with separate ornamental capitals. While the Thūpārāma Dāgäba had four rows of them, that at the Lankārāma had only three. The inner row consisted of twenty square at the lower part and octagonal above, each 16 feet 8 inches high. The middle row had 28 similar pillars, 16 feet 11 inches high, their tops

being on a level with those of the inner line, on account of a drop in the flooring. And the outer row 40 octagonal pillars, 12 feet 5 inches high.

All measure from 11 to $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, and they have a general resemblance to those at the Thūpārāma, but they have no tenons at the top. The animals carved on the capitals are horned lions in the inner row, sitting lions in the middle one, and dwarfs in the outer row, some of them playing flutes while others dance.

Bell, in his Report for 1910–11, declared : " The Lankārāma Dāgäba—one of the " Aṭamasthāna ", or Eight Sacred Sites, to which the Crown asserts no claim—has for years been allowed to remain in a dilapidated state, completely ruined on the north side, without any effort on the part of the Buddhists to repair it, though such restoration would involve little expense and no technical difficulty ".

And he added ; " Sale in recent years of land to the south and east of the Lankārāma ruins, and the conversion into rice fields of most of the neighbouring area—still surrounded by a well-defined earthen bund—has for ever destroyed all hope of extending excavation in those directions. Add to this the fact that the culverts on the ' Y Road ' have been constructed out of much of the stone recklessly drawn from existing ruins. Destruction and despoiling are at this day patent everywhere within the erstwhile moated area, some acres in extent ". Three moat-like depressions (two partially, one completely) encircling the Lankārāma Dāgäba are styled *diya-agal*, " moats ". They were, as probably circular roads, converted into temporary moats in the wet season.

Whether what we call the Lankārāma today is really the ancient " Silāsobbha-kandaka " which King Valagambāhu erected a hundred years before Christ, or some other ' *vehera* of which the ancient name has yet to be fixed ' is a question which still remains to be determined beyond all possibility of doubt.

The paved circular *maluva*, or "platform", of the Dāgäba was partly freed of loose brick *débris* many years ago by the Archæological Survey Department, in the hope, which proved to be vain, of discovering some inscription on the pavement slabs which would settle the real name of this stūpa. It is both strange and unfortunate, as Mr. Bell declares, that no stone record has been discovered to settle the identity, either amid the encircling ruins or at the Dāgäba itself.

8.—Jetavanarama Dagaba

[*What, by a curious mistake, is still popularly called and known as the "Jētavanārāma" is, in reality, the "Abhayagiri" or Northern Dāgäba. The real "Jētavanārāma", similarly miscalled the "Abhayagiri", is the Eastern Dāgäba. Tradition appears to have confounded one name with the other.*]

One thousand six hundred and sixty-two years ago, that is in A.D. 286, King Mahāsēna, the last of the "*Mahāvaṁsa*" or "Great Dynasty", in the eleventh year of his reign, succumbed to the influence of a "heretical" monk named Kohontissa Mahā Thēra.

This High Priest belonged to a sect spoken of as the Sāgaliyans, who were established in strength at the Dakkhiṇārāma (*Sinh.* Dakuṇugiri Vihāra), and the king's open association with him marked the beginning of a fresh period of trouble for, or rather persecution of, the orthodox fraternity represented by the monks of the Mahāvihāra.

For, within the ancient boundaries of the Mahāvihāra, in the Jōtivana (*i.e.* Nandana) Park, Mahāsēna soon began the construction of a stately Vihāra for his new friend, Kohontissa High Priest. The project was resisted, of course, the bhikkhus of the Mahāvihāra raising a storm of opposition and protest against the building of Vihāras for other sects within their own limits.

Mahāsēna was overawed but not defeated. Acting on the advice of the ever-mischievous Abhayagiri fraternity, who had more in common with the Sāgaliyan than with the orthodox Thēriya monks, he replied to the protest by ordering the monks of the Mahāvihāra to uproot the existing boundary marks, so as to permit of his putting up the projected building without encroaching on their rights.

This they resolved to refuse to carry out. Fearing further persecution, however, they concealed seven bhikkhus of their Order in a tunnel that was found within the existing boundaries of the Mahāvihāra, and, making a pretence of abandoning the Vihāra, they disappeared from the neighbourhood and the capital.

Directly they left, the Sāgaliyans, for whose leader (Kohontissa) the proposed new Vihāra was intended, began to root out the boundary marks of the Mahāvihāra, when a strange incident is said to have occurred.

Legend has it that a "*rākshasa*" ("demon"), with an iron club in his hand, appeared on the scene, drove away the Sāgaliyans engaged in the mischievous work, and proceeded in the direction of the City of Anurādhapura, whereupon the alarmed king, in order to appease the angry devil, undertook to stay the removal of the boundary marks and to get the scattered monks of the Mahāvihāra to re-occupy their ancient home.

The truth appears to be, however, that a "*sāmaṇēra*" monk of the Situlpavu Vihāra, who happened to be in the capital at the moment and shared the indignation of the Mahāvihāra fraternity at the proposed encroachment on the limits of their monastery, ran "amok" among the Sāgaliyans busily employed in the manner indicated above.

Whether the monk's madness or fit of violence was feigned or real, he seemed to have effectively inspired genuine

consternation and terror, not only among the Sāgaliyans, but also among the citizens, who, crowding into the Royal Palace, besought the king to placate what they described as " this visitation from the angry gods ".

The superstitious Mahāsēna, not knowing what to make of it and over-powered by the fear of the unknown, yielded to the popular commotion. He enquired what was to be done, and was told that only the bringing back of the monks of the Mahāvihāra could save the situation. To this effect he gave orders at once.

Search was immediately made in the capital, and the seven monks who had hidden themselves in the tunnel, within the precincts of the Mahāvihāra, were discovered and produced. Curiously enough, just about the same time, the " *sāmaṇēra* " monk who had run amok was found to have disappeared, no one knew whither.

However, the accepted law at the time was that only " Ownerless land belongs to the King ", and neither Mahāsēna nor the Sāgaliyans could lay claim to the Mahāvihāra, which, as a matter of fact, throughout a period of nine months' apparent abandonment, had really been continuously " occupied " by the seven monks in the tunnel situated within its limits.

These, on behalf of their absent brethren, protested against the shifting of the boundaries. Mahāsēna was constrained to agree, for the protest was valid at law, and he lacked the courage violently to carry out a project which he knew was deeply resented by the people as a whole. Thus did the monks of the Mahāvihāra, after nine months' absence, return once again to the monastery from which they had been compelled to depart twice within eleven years.

But the King did not as yet own defeat. He was not going to let mere monks, however influential with the Sinhalese

people, turn him aside from a project which he had set his will and heart upon. The uprooting or shifting of the boundary marks was a mere detail which he could afford to ignore. What mattered was the new Vihāra which he was determined, anyhow to build.

So a few months after the second return to the capital of the Mahavihāra fraternity, in the twelfth year of his reign, that is, in A.D. 287, Mahāsēna, in spite of strenuous opposition, built the stately Jētavana Vihāra (*Sinh.* Denāvehera or Denānaka), within the precincts of the Mahāvihāra in the Jotivana or Nandana Park, and presented it to his friend and protégé, Kohontissa High Priest, the head of the Sāgaliya sect. And thenceforth did the Sāgaliya heretics, leaving the Dakkhiṇārāma (Dakuṇugiri Vihāra), come into occupation of the Jētavana Vihāra and settle there.

5——J. N. 14675 (11/48)

City Area and Secular Buildings

(including Royal Park and City Tanks)

IN discussing the topography of Anurādhapura, Parker referred to " a low flat-topped ridge " running north and south on the western side of the Malvatu-oya, parallel to it and nearly a mile distant from it. And he added : " The fortified part of the town was built along the top of this ridge, with at least one gate facing the cardinal points. The principal gate at the southern end of the city led into two ornamental gardens of the king, called the Nandana and Mahamegha gardens. From the eastern gate a road passed nearly due east to the Mihintale hill, eight miles away, crossing the Malvatu-oya (Kadamba river) by a bridge ".

It was this that Bell considered (in 1893) to be the Citadel enclosure in which the Royal Palace stood. Three years earlier he had searched for the Royal Palace to the north of the so-called "Jētavanārāma" (Northern Stūpa) ruins, but failed to find it there. "This total failure northward left it certain that the site of the Royal Enclosure or Citadel must lie within the known areas from the Northern Stūpa on the North to Vessagiriya, 1½ miles south of the Uḍa Maluva or sacred Bō Tree precincts ".

Tooth-relic Temple

Within the Citadel are the remains of several important buildings, the most notable among which may be said to be the original Tooth-relic Temple and the famous Mahāpāli Alms Hall.

When the Tooth-relic of the Buddha was first brought to Ceylon early in the 4th century A.D. in the reign of Siri Mēghavanna (304–332 A.D.), it was lodged in an edifice then

BUDDHA IMAGE, OUTER CIRCULAR ROAD

called the *Dhammacakka*, which had been built by Devānampiyatissa in the Royal Park. Thenceforward that house received the name of the *Dāṭhā-dhātughara* or "Tooth-relic House". Its exact location is given by Fa Hien, the famous Chinese pilgrim, who was in Anurādhapura in 412 A.D. and who speaks of it as being "within the Capital". Fa Hien adds that the Tooth-relic used to be brought forth and taken to the Abhayagiri (*i.e.*, the Northern Stūpa) and "after 90 complete days they again returned it to the Vihāra within the City".

Curiously enough, while the historical chronicles are profuse in the details they give of the shrines built for the Tooth-relic in the later capitals of Ceylon, they are meagre in the information they give of this particular Tooth-relic Temple—the first of its kind—in the heart of the ancient capital of Anurādhapura. And the little they tell us is that Dhātusēna (463–479 A.D.) repaired it in his reign, that Aggabodhi I 564–598 A.D.) decorated it with brightly gleaming precious stones, and that Mahinda IV. (975–991 A.D.) rebuilt it after it had been burnt down, along with the Mahāpāli Alms Hall, by a Chola army which had invaded the Capital a few years before his accession to the throne.

A fine inscribed slab found near by, dating from the reign of Mahinda IV, deals with the granting of produce for the upkeep of this Temple of the Tooth.

With even the very foundations removed and the paucity of the fragments and other material still left, it has been a most difficult matter to form an idea even as to the ground plan of the old Relic House, beyond the fact that it was recessed. However, from the tallness of the pillars on the site and from the general dimensions, Dr. Paranavitana has come to the conclusion that "this shrine was one of the most imposing among the edifices of old Anurādhapura". And on a review of what the work of excavation has here produced,

Dr. Paranavitana conjectures that the stratification at this site was somewhat as follows :—

1st Stratum (from above) 9th and 10th centuries.—The remains of the pillared structures, the porch, a subsidiary shrine and the inscribed slab.

2nd Stratum, 8th century.—A brick retaining wall on the western side.

3rd Stratum, 7th and 6th centuries.—The retaining wall built of stone slabs and a stone drain.

4th Stratum, 5th and 4th centuries.—The cistern faced with brick and the retaining wall built of rubble.

Mahapali Alms Hall

Some fifty yards to the west of this Tooth-relic Temple lie the excavated remains of the most famous Alms-hall in Ceylon History, " the refectory called Mahāpāli, easy of approach, beautiful, stored with all provisions and provided with service ", which Devānampiyatissa, early in the 4th century B.C., built " for the accepting of food by the Brotherhood of Bhikkhus when they were visiting the dwelling of the Bhikkuṇis called Hatthālhaka Vihāra (*Mahāvaṁsa*).

At that time the monks, in order to receive food, were accustomed to go in order of seniority to a nunnery called the Hatthālhaka Convent. The Mahāpāli was built by Devānampiyatissa to serve as a refectory for the Bhikkhus, separate from the nunnery, and history makes it clear that this was the purpose for which it was used for at least a thousand years thereafter, certainly right up to the end of the Anurādhapura period.

Khujja Nāga (193–195 A.D.), for instance, as the *Mahāvaṁsa* tells us in this connection, continued alms-giving at the Mahāpāli even when a severe famine was raging in the Island. Upatissa II (370–412 A.D.) distributed food from

the Royal table at the Mahāpāli, he himself taking no other food than that served at this Alms-hall. And in the same way Silākāla (526–539 A.D.) distributed here delicious meats prepared likewise as for himself. Aggabodhi (564–598 A.D.) caused a canoe of bronze to be made at the Mahāpāli, and his successor of the same name enlarged it and also set up a canoe for gifts of rice. Dāṭhopatissa II (664–673 A.D.) not only maintained the custom of feeding the monks at this Alms-hall but also had clothing, rice with sour milk, milk and milk-rice distributed there. Udaya I (901–912 A.D.) enlarged the Mahāpāli, and Mahinda IV (975–991 A.D.), whose slab inscription has been found at the spot, is recorded to have restored the Mahāpāli after it had been burnt by a Chola army which had invaded the capital in the reign of his predecessor.

A most striking and interesting object at the site of the Mahāpāli is a large stone trough, known as a *Käṅda-oruva* or " gruel-boat ". Similar troughs have been found elsewhere in the ancient City and environs, and the popular belief about them at one time was that they were used as receptacles for gruel for feeding the " Giants " who cut and removed the stone slabs utilised in the buildings of ancient Anurādhapura. Since, however, they have usually been found in buildings identified as alms-halls for the monks, there can be no doubt that they were used as receptacles for boiled rice intended for feeding the monks. On this particular stone trough, described as a *gal-näva* or " stone-boat ", are three short inscriptions of the 10th century, two of which refer to the place as " this Mahāpāli ".

When, for purposes of a more thorough excavation than had been possible to Bell half a century ago, the clearing of the Mahāpāli site was undertaken some fifteen years back by the present Archæological Commissioner, Dr. S. Paranavitana, the only indications of any buildings were a few stumps of roughly-dressed stone pillars to the west and south of the stone trough referred to above. No remains of walls or

foundations were traceable anywhere. Dr. Paranavitana's excavations resulted in the unearthing of what is left of the foundations of the building belonging to the latest stratum at this site, the remains of earlier structures at lower levels on the northern and eastern sides, and a remarkable well at the north-western corner of the Mahāpāli.

Like the neighbouring Tooth-relic Temple, the Mahāpāli (both of which, by the way, had once formed part of one royal establishment) had been used as a quarry for building materials after it had fallen into decay, and its very foundations had been removed on the north and east sides. Such of the remains as are still *in situ* have, however, made it possible to conjecture that the Mahāpāli at one stage measured at least 128 ft. north to south and 120 ft. east to west.

The well referred to above is said to be unique, one " the like of which has not been found at any other ancient site in Ceylon ". (Paranavitana). The excavations here were carried to a depth of 26 ft. 7 in. from the 10th century floor level, and 35 ft. from the modern ground level. What distinguishes this from the numerous other ancient wells found at Anurādhapura are the flights of steps, passages and platforms, constructed along its eastern, northern, and western sides, which enable one to descend with ease and safety right down to the very bottom.

Among the minor antiquities found at the site, the most interesting is a small flat piece of crystal, oval in shape, with the edges bevelled and containing a female figure carved in intaglio. Dr. Paranavitana's opinion is that this crystal was a seal and was set in a signet ring. Sir John Marshall, the late Director-General of Archæology in India, to whom the question was referred, took the view that it was " a very decadent imitation of the Graeco-Roman or Graeco-Persian seals which found their way to the north-west of India in the early centuries of the Christian era ", and that the probable date of the seal should be the 4th or 5th century A.D. The

art shown in the representation of the female figure on the seal may not be of a very high class, says Dr. Paranavitana, but " the carving, on such a minute scale and also with such sure and firm lines, bespeaks a high degree of skill in the lapidary who executed it ".

"Selacetiya Dagaba"

Exactly why this pretty little Dāgäba, situated between the Ruvanväli-Sāya and the Eastern Dāgäba, enjoys, comparatively speaking, a greater reputation for sacredness than a good many of the other and better known shrines of Anurādhapura, it is difficult to say. But it is a fact that it is very widely reverenced, and few if any pilgrims miss it in their rounds of the City. It is the Sila Thūpa—the " little Thūpa built of stones "—which Lañjatissa (119–109 B.C.) built " to the east of the Thūpārāma ", in the 2nd century before Christ.

The Dāgäba, 37 ft. 8 in. in diameter and cased entirely in brick, rests upon a platform revetted with massive stone slabs, dressed and boldly moulded. Granite stairs, balustraded by elaborate *Makara*-capped wings with seven-hooded *Nāga-dvārapāla* terminals and plain moonstones at foot, exist on the south and east only.

"Mayura Pirivena"

A once very beautiful shrine—a Vihāra measuring 66 ft. by 45 ft. 6 in.—is that well-known ruin in the heart of the town, close to the Anurādhapura-Kuruṇāgala road, known as " Mayura Pirivena ", which, according to Bell, is " a misnomer commonly mistranslated ' Peacock Palace ' ". Its position has naturally subjected it to the prejudice of virtually wholesale despoliation. Both guard-stones and much of the stone work of its portico have gone for ever, together with the shafts of the inner columns, all of which were of limestone.

All that remains *in situ* is one balustrade, one step, the moonstone and most of the original 24 pillars.

These are ornate pillars which, with their plain squared shaft and spreading capitals, rise 11 ft. from floor level. The ornamentation of the capitals assimilates to the other Vihāras of this type. The *makara*-topped balustrade is exceedingly well executed. The wide steps had triple dwarfs and pilasters on their risers, and at foot the solitary moonstone referred to above, quite plain save for a central lotus flower carved in relief—the more chaste from its simplicity.

"Ransimalakaya"

What is to-day "a handsome monument of ancient Anurādhapura", in the heart of the modern Town, is situated near the central market place, at the junction where five roads meet.

When over half a century ago this ruin came within the purview of the Archæological Survey, there was no more than a pillared site, with signs of a heavy moulded stone basement, and it had for years been used, or rather abused, as a cattle pound. Digging revealed a large quadrangular ruin with bold stone-faced revetment, ovolo parapet and four flights of steps. Restoration work has freed the building of surface and surrounding debris, its disordered slab walls and stairs neatly reset, and the high road on the north held back from it by retaining masonry.

All traces of the defiling cattle pound have since vanished. Bell considered that, if regularly laid out, the building originally must have possessed no less than 80 squared pillars, arranged in eight rows of ten from the northern or southern entrances, and that as there are no traces of brick walls, the building was presumably a sort of open hall with a wooden railing round it, and immediately inside the quarter round stone parapet of the basement.

The real name of this ruin is unknown. Two generations ago Buddhist monks were content to call it merely " Bhojana Sālāva " or Refectory. To-day, " Ransimālakaya " is the grandiose name given to it by the learned Buddhists of Anurādhapura.

Elala's Tomb

After Elāla (or Elāra), the great Tamil ruler of Anurādhapura, was slain in single combat by Duṭugämuṇu in 161 B.C., his body was cremated and his ashes deposited in a tomb at the spot where he fell, " near the southern gate of the city " (*Mah.*) And a tree-covered hillock, on the Kuruṇāgala road in the town of Anurādhapura, has for generations been regarded and pointed out as the " Elāla Sohoṇa " or resting-place of Elāla's ashes.

The ruin at the spot is, however, what, after the fell work done by vandals, remains of the ancient Dakkiṇavihāra or Southern Dāgäba, built by the warrior Uttiya in the reign of Vaṭṭa Gāmani (B.C. 104–77). Recent excavations conducted by Dr. Paranavitana have revealed the foundations of the " *Vāhalkaḍas* ", a granite-carved pillar and a few stone slabs including one with a carving of a double footprint of the Buddha. The solitary massive pillar, carved with figures of men and animals (such as the elephant, lion, horse, bull) is " one of the best specimens of old Sinhalese sculpture found in Anurādhapura ".

The "Magul Uyana" or Royal Park of Ancient Anuradhapura

To Dr. S. Paranavitana, the present Archæological Commissioner, belongs the credit and distinction of a most interesting as well as important discovery connected with the topographical features of ancient Anurādhapura—the identification of the famous " *Magul Uyana* " or Royal Park, which,

according to tradition, was the scene of the fateful meeting of those two most romantic figures in Ceylon History, namely, Prince Sāli, the only son of the hero-king Duṭugämuṇu, and the low-caste maiden, famed as Asokamālā, to espouse whom he gave up the throne of Lankā.

The "*Magul-Uyana*", also known as the "Gold-fish" Park, has been located in an area (since demarcated) below the embankment of the Tisā-väva, containing a group of ancient remains, the principal features of which are summarised below (from a paper on the subject read by Dr. Paranavitana before the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1944).

A ridge of granite formation runs north to south in the western side of this area almost parallel to the embankment. In the northern part this formation consists of flat rocks almost flush with the ground level, and a few solitary boulders. In the southern part, there are clusters of boulders among which are a number of caves, of irregular shape, resting on rocks of whale-back formation. The scenic effect of these clusters of rock boulders had been taken into account in the lay-out of the various architectural features, as, according to ancient Indian theories of architecture and town-planning, artificial hillocks and grottoes were essential features in parks and pleasure gardens. Nature had provided here, in Anurādhapura, what the designers of parks elsewhere in India had normally to create with great labour and expense. And, apart from the rocks and boulders and caves, there was the beautiful sheet of water of the Tisā-väva as an attractive background to the whole scene.

The rock boulders in the southern part of this area are in two clusters. And it was in connection with the more northerly of these two groups that the most striking architectural features yet preserved on this site, namely, three baths with connected buildings, had been constructed. At, the northern extremity of the rock group is a hummock

against the sloping eastern side of which had been constructed a stone bath " most striking in its happy conception and special features ". On the western side of this bath a flight of three stone steps flanked with plain splayed balustrades and inverted shield guardstones lead from the paved bottom of the bath to a cramped round-back chamber scooped out of the rock and containing a stone *āsana* (seat) cut out of the rock. The exposed rock surface on either side of this chamber is covered with bas-reliefs singularly appropriate to the purpose of adorning a bathing pond. They represent two groups of elephants sporting in a lotus pool. The elephants are wonderfully life-like—one of them, in particular, with its head and trunk turned back, has been delineated with masterly skill. *This bas-relief has to be counted among the best productions of the plastic art of the ancient Sinhalese.*

On the top of the ridge to the south of the *pokuṇa* referred to above had been excavated a circular basin, 4 feet in diameter. Around this rock-cut basin are sockets for wooden posts. The basin, therefore, seems to have been inside some kind of pavilion. Three flights of steps cut on the western side of the rock give access to its summit. This rock-cut basin appears in the circumstances to have been an object of considerable importance. Its purpose has been rightly surmised by Dr. Paranavitana to have been the receptacle for the gold-fish from which the park received its name. Obviously, the gold-fish could not have been kept in the baths, of which the water had to be emptied periodically. In the large sheets of water in which lotuses and other aquatic flowers were grown, they could not have been easily seen. If, however, the gold-fish were kept in this basin which could hold a quantity of water sufficient for them, they could have been seen and admired with ease by visitors to the park.

The group of boulders here is of very picturesque appearance. Among them is a small cave. The intervening space between two adjoining boulders had been bridged by pillar-like slabs of stone, and a platform had been constructed on it

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with bricks laid in lime mortar. On this elevated terrace must have stood some kind of pavilion from which one could have had a striking view of the Tisā-väva and the various baths and pavilions in this area. Perched on two rugged boulders, it must have presented a delightful scene to the beholder when this site was in its pristine condition.

The most striking group of remains to be seen in this area are at the southern end of the rock group. It consists of a stone-faced bath open to the sky, a smaller bath which was inside a pillared pavilion, a stone-built chamber connected with the smaller bath, and an edifice on a raised terrace. In the planning of this group of connected buildings, the natural rock had been chiselled and partly incorporated in floors as well as in walls, and the difference of ground level afforded by the rock formation had been skilfully utilised in the design. The flat roof of the chamber, constructed of large slabs of stone resting on the back wall and the architrave, is elaborately treated in the interior, showing the details of construction of a panelled wooden ceiling. The facade is of very pleasing aspect, and, in its tone, if not in architectural details, it has a classical atmosphere about it. The two baths and the chamber form together a well-balanced architectural group. *The key-note of the whole composition is its simplicity, characteristic of Sinhalese architecture at its best.*

Among the group of boulders in the southern area, there are no remains of any noteworthy edifices. However, on one of the boulders of this group are grooves indicating that it had a brick-built edifice on its summit. Among these boulders are four caves with drip ledges and remains of brick walls. On the sloping rock wall of the cave numbered 2 is a mysterious circle, 6 feet in diameter, which " is seared by rectangular divisions containing figures (mostly small circles), the whole girt, as a tyred wheel, by a band on which is displayed various crustacean life swimming round right to left ". Bell has suggested that this circle is an old cosmographical chart.

Further to the east, in that portion of the ancient Park which has now passed into private ownership, are some remains of an ancient edifice. But it has not been possible to be definite regarding its ground plan or character, as the tilled soil has obscured its outlines. Among the remains in this area, the most noteworthy are those of baths, one of which is probably a "shower-bath house". There are also stone seats, oblong pools, boulders and caves. All these are features of ancient Pleasure Gardens as they are known to us from literature. The structural remains, of which the precise character cannot now be ascertained, may, says Dr. Paranavitana, represent the various types of Pavilions and ornamental buildings with which Pleasure Gardens of ancient times were usually adorned.

The Three Largest Tanks of Anuradhapura

(1) Basavak-kulama

The tank originally called Abhaya-vāpi, which is today known as Basavak-kulama, may be said to be the earliest constructive work which can be identified with certainty in Ceylon. And it is the first of the great irrigation works which formed a very special feature of the ancient civilisation of Lankā.

These irrigation works were intended to store and convey the necessary water for the rice-fields which the Sinhalese had begun to form wherever places suitable for such were found. And the system they adopted at first was to impound the water in reservoirs or tanks with low embankments. From these the water was gradually passed out, either directly on to the fields where it was required, or by means of excavated channels down which it flowed to them.

Later, however, when the people had acquired a better knowledge of the art of raising embankments to hold back

greater depths of water, the constructive genius of the Sinhalese asserted itself and schemes of a more comprehensive character were attempted. Great earthern embankments, often some miles in length, were raised across many suitable valleys, intercepting in this manner the flow of the streams and storing up, during the rainy seasons, in the tanks thus formed, immense sheets of water for the irrigation of large tracts of land, lower down in the valleys, that were found suitable for rice cultivation.

Basavak-kulama (*i.e.*, the Abhaya-vāpi), constructed by Paṇḍukābhaya (B.C. 437–407), represented the former, that is the less ambitious, effort. Its original area was about 330 acres, and its capacity about 133 million cubic feet. The embankment has in our day been measured at 5,910 feet long, or 1½ miles.

The plan of the tank shows that a much shorter bank might have been carried across the valley in a south-east line from the flood-escape to a projecting point on the opposite side of the Tank. But this would have removed the water nearly half a mile from the capital (Anurādhapura), whereas the evident aim of the designer was to construct the tank as close to the town as possible. He, therefore, ran the bank to a position lower down where, on the Eastern side, the ground level was below that of the water to be retained. From this point he turned the line in an up-stream direction, at nearly a rectangle, until higher ground was encountered.

The tank was thus well designed to fulfil its purpose—the storage of rainfall close to the town, for the water-supply of the City and for bathing purposes. The Basavak-kulama remained unbreached as long as Anurādhapura was inhabited, that is, for more than 1,500 years—a wonderful record for a work of such early date.

(2) Tisa Vava

The Tisā-väva was constructed by Devānampiyatissa (B.C. 307–267), by the side of Isurumuniya Vihāra, in order to promote the agricultural activities of the people in the southern part of his capital.

The valley in which the tank was made was very shallow and the design took a peculiar form in consequence. A straight bank was raised across the lower part of the ground for nearly three-quarters of a mile, running nearly north and south. From each end of this a long arm was carried in an up-stream direction, forming an obtuse angle with the central part, and being continued until ground was met with sufficiently high to prevent the escape of floods.

The embankment was 11,000 feet or 2½ miles in length, and about 25 feet high across the bed of the valley, which is flat for a long distance. The area of the tank was about 396 acres, but its capacity is unknown. The bank was a well made and substantial work, so much so that modern Engineers declare that, with a little attention, it " *may last practically for ever* ".

(3) Nuvara Vava

Nuvara-väva is by far the largest of the three Anurādhapura reservoirs and is probably the latest to be constructed of the three. Parker ascribes it to the first century B.C. but gives no valid reason for that view. Dr. Paranavitana, in a note in connection with the Thūpārāma Slab Inscription (*Ep. Zeyl.* III. p. 119), deals with a tank called " *Nakara vavi* ". Hocart considered that, etymologically, it is the same as Nuvara-väva and that it is probably the same tank. In that case Nuvara-väva was in existence in the 2nd century A.D.

The full area of Nuvara-väva is 2,960 acres, and its capacity 37,780 acre feet or 1,645,696,800 cubic feet, or 10,269,184,032 gallons. The length of the dam is 4 miles and 1,100 feet, and its maximum height 40 feet.

6——J. N. 14675 (11/48)

CHAPTER IV

The Western Monasteries

THE term "Western Monasteries" is applied to a number of Platforms, not infrequently also called the "Outer Circular Road Palaces", because they all lie near the western half of the Outer Circular Road and were once mistaken for palaces, pavilions or other secular buildings. All except two are Double Platforms.

The main features of these monastic ruins, as noted by Bell, may briefly be summarised as follows :

(1) All occupy comparatively level rocky sites.

(2) Each group comprised a large double-platformed structure or Priory, surrounded (with one exception) by a stone-walled *prākāraya* ("rampart"), with *piriven*(*i.e.*, monastic colleges), and other appurtenant, buildings, both single-chambered and double-roomed, lying off it.

(3) The precincts of each priory were entered, always on the east front, through a pillared and roofed *doraṭuva*, porch or portico. In addition they had, as a rule, postern gateways pierced in the north and south side walls of the enclosure, but not at back.

(4) The main porches were all of one stereotyped design. They were roofed in lengthways by horizontal stone slabs resting on eight pillars (two rows of four), both inside and out.

(5) Behind the doorway, to each side, were *pil-paḍi*, or "raised lounges", with a pair of stone *sedilia* to promote rest.

(6) Round the inner face of the *prākāraya* ran a raised ambulatory, 6 feet to 8 feet in width, used as a *cankramana* (" ambulatory ") for meditative pacing, friendly converse, and exercise.

(7) Occasionally, if the conformation of the rock base allowed, a bath was provided within the precincts, supplementing the " stone-pits " and " ponds " found outside.

(8) The priories and replica *piriven* were constructed on one unvarying design, both in plan and elevation.

(9) Every front platform was a hypethral unroofed *maṇḍapa* (" hall "), quite open to sky and air everywhere.

(10) The back chamber stood on a stereobate of granite construction, mantled in the regular " Anurādhapura moulding ", with heavy coping gangway of few slabs. The walls were either of sun-dried brick, wattle-and-daub, or simple boarding, which has perished long ago. Its roof (tiled, as excavation has proved) was invariably supported on 16 stone pillars. Pillars (two or three a side) also held a light roof over the bridge-gangway.

(11) One outhouse, specially dedicated to Cloacina, was relegated to a fixed position at a suitable distance from habitations. This was the *vesakiliya* or " jakes ", located to north-west on sanitary rather than on religious grounds.

These distinctive ruins are of such extraordinary interest that a statement of their exact location, together with some notes about the more striking characteristics of some of them, will be helpful to the visitor, particularly since they are constituted of at least eight separate blocks, more or less apart.

They are situated from 1 to 2½ miles north-west of the present Town, and broadly speaking, west of the Jētavanārāma-Laṅkārāma areas.

Block A embraces the two groups of these ruins nearest to the Town. It adjoins the path which unites the Basavak-kulam Tank bund with the Arippu Road. A particular interest attaching to this Block is the fact that, in the course of the Archæological Survey Department's operations here in 1913, two tiny gold images of the sedent Buddha were excavated.

Block B represents a cluster of ruins occurring a few hundred yards west of Block A, where the path from Basavak-kulam runs into the Arippu Road. And three distinct groups, once Monasteries, lie one behind the other at short intervals. The ruins stretch almost from the present Outer Circular Road on the west to the edge of the Arippu Road which lies east. They can be reached equally well from either road. Both are little more than a mile distant from the Anurādhapura-Puttalam Road and from the Town, but, being off the beaten track, are rarely seen by visitors.

Points to note in group 1 of this Block are the precincts of the Priory and the Priory itself. Inside the *prākāra* wall enclosing the Priory ran all round a raised walk, about 6 feet wide, still quite clear in places, which Mr. H. C. P. Bell surmised was the *cankramaṇa* or "ambulatory" of the Monastery. And roughly centred within its *prākāraya* and ambulatory was erected the chief structure of the Monastery—two platforms, one behind the other, united by a spacious gangway of massive granite slabs. This Priory is said to furnish one of the best examples of the double-platform type of building to be seen in these distinctive Western blocks of Anurādhapura ruins.

A rock-cut "pond" is the most striking thing in group 2 of this Block. The original "stone-pit" had been artificially improved into a delightful bow-shaped bath, cut to curve at bottom, with slabs lining the concave rock-face to north. The "particular pride" of the third group in this same block is a gigantic bridge-gangway which once connected two

buildings. This solid slab of granite, said to weigh nearly 30 tons, has been " moulded, smoothed and fitted as if it were a mere toy. And as it rests on a wall of strong stone masonry at either end, which again rests on natural rock, it has suffered hardly any damage from either time or Tamils ". (Burrows.)

Block C consists of two isolated ruins, about half a mile from the Anurādhapura-Puttalam main road to south. " The convenient proximity of the ruin to the road, and the need of finding ashlar for culverts regardless of consequences, gave native Road Overseers in bygone years material, easily obtainable, which they did not scruple to appropriate ". (Bell.)

Block D marks the junction of the Arippu and Outer Circular Roads, and in the second of its two groups is a double-platformed Priory, perhaps the largest and best preserved of all in the several Blocks. Hardly a stone of either half seems missing or out of position. The most striking feature of this Priory is its gigantic gangway-slab, a monolith in granite, the immense weight of which may be estimated from the measurements, viz., 14 ft. 8 in. in depth to back by 13 ft. 6 in. across, with a thickness of 2 ft. 3 in. Some idea of the hugeness of the slabs utilised at this Priory may be formed by noting the size of the coping of the two platforms. The *maṇḍapaya*, covering a frontage of 44 ft. 6 in. with side stretch of 37 ft. 3 in., required only eleven slabs (two nearly 18 ft. long), and the roomed part at back but ten (two for each side and four for the front) for their stereobate gangways. What Mitton refers to as the most interesting detail in this block is a *mūtra-gala*, a " urinal ", so highly decorated and sculped as to be almost startling in the midst of buildings whose sole adornment is a plain mould or may be a little fluted pilaster in low relief. " The decoration of this wonderful piece of work can only be described as flamboyant. On the horizontal slab is a representation of the inevitable house ".

Block E occurs a short distance further eastwards along the Outer Circular Road and is within sight of Block D. The precincts of the Priory here differ markedly from those of others by sheltering within them a pair of double-platform *piriven* which flank the back portion of the Priory. This is said to be the sole instance of such inclusion met with at any of these monasteries. And the six socketed pillars at this Priory have survived far better here than elsewhere. The back pair of these pillars, both unbroken and standing, not on the gangway like the others, but in an incised recess so as to run down to the rock base, are said to be unique in having two-armed *pēkaḍa*, (" bracket heads "), not disconnected but cut from the same stone as the shafts.

Excavation in 1912 of a " minor ruin " on a site behind Block E revealed a choicely sculptured slab, which served as the flag-paving of a urinal. A lotus boss held the ablution chatty, there are oblong foot-rests, and a channelette led to the escape. Viewed *en elevation* the slab represents in relief duplicated pseudo balustrades, addorsed, of the *makara* and flowing-scroll design, terminating not by the usual volutes but in the open jaws of a second pair of *makaras*, whose heads are thrown well back. The lower breasts rest on false pedestals, each panelled in front with a profile lion between pilasters. Dwarfs ride the upper *makaras*, whose feet are supported on dimidiated pilasters cut short by the foot-rests, between which is pierced the depressed exit hole. A full-blown raised lotus crowns the arch. This fine slab measures 4 ft. by 3 ft. 6 in.

Block F (in 2 groups) lies still further on, immediately beyond the present small bridge spanning the Yōda-äla Channel which crosses the road as it runs on towards the " Jētavanārāma " ruins. The main gateway into the inner precincts of the first group is particularly interesting, as it is the *only instance*, among all the Blocks, of the *inside* of

the entrance Porch remaining to prove its similarity to the outer. At this monastery the construction of these porticos is well illustrated.

Except A, these five Blocks (B., C., D., E. and F.) all touch driving roads and are therefore easily reached. The two remaining Blocks (G. and H.) are situated to the north of the Outer Circular Road between the 2nd and 3rd milestones.

Block G.—The importance of this Block lies, according to Bell, in the fact that "it furnishes, as supplementary to the Mirisavätiya ruins on the south, the desired architectural link to the north, between the trio-grouped sacred structures (*vihāre* and pair of *piriven* off its front angles) and the double-platform type of building enclosed within a rectangular *prālāaya* exemplified at the other Blocks of these Western Monasteries.

Block H.—Of the Blocks of ruins with double-platformed structures, this is the nearest to the Jētavanārāma area. It can be reached either from the present branch road to Karaṁbāva village, striking west along the ancient kerbed by-street, or more conveniently, by a modern path turning northwards a little short of the 3rd milestone on the Outer Circular Road, from which the ruins are about only a quarter mile distant.

Identification of the Western Monasteries

There can be no question that the Monasteries of this class found at Anurādhapura existed up to a late date. Strong support as to the late existence of these Western Monasteries came to light in recent years when, at the Priory in group 1 of Block B, four *aksaras* (syllables) reading "VESAMUNA" (*i.e.*, Vaisravana, Guardian of the North and God of Wealth) were found inscribed on a revetment slab lining the "moat" at back of the platformed *maṇḍapaya*. The writing is unmistakably of the 10th or 11th century.

For whom, then, were these Western Monasteries built? Or, as Bell asked the same question more graphically and incisively: "What ascetical monks once bore with the isolation and physical discomfort of habitations built on exposed sun-smitten rock rather than accept shelter at better-found, cool and shady Monasteries of gregarious, if less austere, Brethren of the Robe?"

And Bell's own answer, based on the testimony of the *Mahāvaṁsa*, was that these ascetical monks were none other than that rag-robed fraternity known as the "Pansukūlika Brethren", namely the Bhikkhus who wore only *pansukūla* robes, made from rags picked up from dust heaps, cemeteries and the like.

Hocart in his memoir on this subject says that these Western Monasteries were "so alike in general style that they cannot cover a great space of time, and *the period from the 8th to 10th centuries would suit them well*".

Let us note here the testimony of the *Mahāvaṁsa* as to what the kings of Lankā did and sought to do for the Pansukūlika monks during this period:

Aggabodhi V. (726–736 A.D.) "built the Vihāra Kodambagona at Mahathala, the Vihāra Girinagara in Devapāli, the Deva Vihāra in Antarasobbha, the Rajamatika Monastery and gave them to the Pansukulins".

Aggabodhi VII. (781–787 A.D.) "had rice by allotment distributed to the inmates of the three fraternities, and delicious foods fitting for himself to the Pansukulins".

Dappula III. (827–843 A.D.) "had a discerning Senāpati by name Vajira. This Vajira built the Kacchavāla Monastery for Pansukulins".

Sena I. (846–866 A.D.) "for the Pansukūlika bhikkhus built a monastery on the Ariṭṭha mountain (Riṭigala), erected as if by magic, and endowed it with large revenues. He granted it also an equipment without flaw worthy of a King, many helpers of the Monastery and slaves as work people".

Kassapa IV. (912–929 A.D.) "had the splended parivena called Samuddagiri built in the Mahavihāra and made it over to the Pansukūlika bhikkhus. Having made a dwelling in the wilderness (*araññna*) called after his family, he granted it to the bhikkus of the Mahavihāra who dwelt in the forests".

Geiger, the translator of the *Mahāvaṁsa*, says in a footnote here: "By *araññna* is meant the *Tapovana*, the forest district to the west of Anurādhapura in which the group of the so-called Western Monasteries lies".

It is thus not unreasonable to hold with Bell, that the Buddhist monks who occupied the inclement rock stretches, apart from other fraternities, may well have been a Pansukūlika schism which had cut itself adrift from their Buddhist brethren and shunned the haunts of men. "That such semi-isolation in no way lessened, but rather increased, the power they exercised, and the respect they received, is amply borne out by the *Mahāvaṁsa*, which emphasises the deference shown to, and the favours conferred upon, these jungle-haunting monks by the Ceylon rulers of the 10th century".

For in the reign of Udaya II. (952-955 A.D.) these "Pansukūlika Brethren" had played a stirring part on local politics, humbling to the dust the King, the Crown Prince and the Āpā (Governor). A revolt of certain Ministers had occurred. Being worsted, they fled to the fancied sanctuary of the "Tapovana" ascetics, that is the monks of these Western Monasteries, but in vain. Pursued by royalty into the very precincts of this sacred forest seclusion, the rebels were captured and fortwith beheaded. But the monks soon exacted full reparation from the cowed monarch and the princes. This is the grim story as related in the *Mahāvaṁsa*:

"At that time officials of the Court fled for fear of the king to the grove of the penitents (*i.e.*, the 'Tapovana').

The king and the *Uparaja* went thither and had their heads cut off. Being indignant at this deed, the ascetics dwelling there left the king's land and betook themselves to Rohana.

"Thereupon the people in town and country and the troops became rebellious, like the ocean stirred by wild storm. They climbed the Ratana-pāsāda (today known as the "Elephant Stables") in the Abhayuttara-vihāra, terrified the king by threats, struck off the heads of the officials who had helped the strife in the Penitents' Grove, and flung them out of the window.

"When the Yuvaraja and his friend, the Adipāda, saw that, they sprang over the wall and fled in haste to Rohana. A division of troops pursued them to the banks of the Kanha-nadī (also known as Kālanadī, the river forming the boundary of Rohana); but as they could get no boats and the two were already across, they returned.

"The Princes, who in the Penitents' Grove had broken the precept of inviolability, betook themselves to the ascetics, threw themselves to the ground at their feet, with their damp garments and hair, wailed much, lamented and whined, and sought to conciliate the penitents. Through the influence of the peaceability and benevolence of the Masters of the Order, the good deeds of the Island Princes told in their favour.

"When the army had calmed down, the inmates of the three Fraternities went to pacify the troops of the Yuvarāja. The two Princes, who were cultured and well-instructed people, turned imploring to the Pansukūlin bhikkhus, and returned with them to their town.

"At the head of the bhikkus (that is, of those inmates of the three Fraternities who were working for conciliation) the King advanced towards them, obtained their pardon, took them with him, brought them back to their Grove, and betook himself to the Royal Palace".

Isurumuniya and Vessagiriya

THE Rock Temple of Isurumuniya, situated by the bund of the Tisā-väva, about a mile from Anurādhapura, and the Monastery which once stood amid and around the Vessagiriya Rocks not far away, formed at one time a single establishment, the foundation of which was laid in the 3rd century before Christ when, in the "Issarasamaṇa" of those days, Prince Mahāriṭṭa, the nephew and Prime Minister of King Devānampiyatissa, together with 500 nobles, took up residence after they had been ordained priests by Mahinda, the Buddhist Apostle of Lankā.

Rock inscriptions of about the 1st century A.D. (yet unpublished) found at Vessagiriya refer to the place as *Isiramana*, a name which (according to Dr. Paranavitana) "may be interpreted as 'Hermits' Delight' and from which the form *Issarasamaṇa* of the chronicles is a learned but inaccurate restoration to Pali and the modern *Isurumuni* a natural development".

The *Mahāvaṁsa* records how the parricide King, Kassapa I. (479–497 A.D.), "began to rue the deed he had done" and, obsessed with the thought of how he could be saved from the consequences of his evil act, "performed many meritorious works". Chief among these works of merit was that "he restored the Issarasamaṇārāma so that it was larger than the former ground, bought villages for its support and granted them to it".

Moreover, "he had two daughters Bodhi and Uppalavannā; he gave their names and his own to this Vihāra. When he handed it over to the *samaṇas* of the Thera School (*i.e.*, the

Thēravādi Brethren), they were loth to take it, fearing the reproach of the people, because it was the work of a parricide. As, however, the King wished to give it to them, he presented it to the image of the Supreme Buddha. Then the bhikkhus agreed, thinking : it belongs to the Master "—thus something that benefits not the Monastery or its inmates, but the Buddha himself.

This makes it clear that Kassapa made a great monastic establishment out of the Vessagiri and Issarasamaṇa Vihāras, and that this enlarged Monastery was named after his two daughters and Kassapa himself. And two out of four 6th century inscriptions from Vessagiriya, published recently by Dr. Paranavitana in the *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, afford more than mere confirmatory evidence of the fact. For one of them mentions the Kasapgiri Vihāra, and another the Boya-Opulavana-Kasapgiri Vihāra.

One point of interest in these lithic records is the proof they afford that the Monastery, the remains of which are now known as Vessagiriya, was in fact the Issarasamaṇa or Kassapagiri-Vihāra. Another is the confirmation they give of the fact, already known from epigraphical evidence of the 2nd century, that, however dissonant to the spirit of Buddhism, slaves were owned by Buddhist Monasteries of Ceylon in the 6th century.

For these four epigraphs, which are all similar in their contents, records the obtaining of freedom from slavery, of themselves or of their relatives, by various individuals who are named. Two individuals mentioned in one of these inscriptions obtained their manumission by paying 100 *kahāpaṇas* to the Issarasamaṇa Monastery. This and the fact that the records of the manumission are engraved within the precincts of the monastery itself, make it clear that the slaves set free belonged to this religious establishment.

Yet more interesting facts connected with the Monastery in the 10th century are to be gleaned from another inscription found on its grounds and containing an edict of Mahinda IV. (956–972 A.D.), laying down in some detail the manner in which the fields around the Issarasamaṇa-vihāra and belonging to that Monastery were to be supplied with water from the Tisā-väva, according to the practice established in the time of the great-grandfather of that King.

The full significance of this inscription and its implications were not adequately realised when it was first edited and published over forty years ago. But a more critical and scholarly study of it, made in our day by Dr. Paranavitana, has made it possible clearly to establish that there existed, in the time of Mahinda IV., an arrangement by which the water which was let out from one of the sluices of the Tisā-väva for the purpose of irrigating a park near that Tank and for feeding ponds and certain other features in that Park, was also made use of for the purpose of irrigating the adjoining fields which belonged to the Isurumuni-vihāra.

The wording of the inscription makes it clear that the water from the Tisā-väva coming through the " royal sluice " first passed through this Park and ponds before it went to the fields around the Isurumuni-vihāra. The Park was thus in the close vicinity of the Tisā-väva. The ruins that are to be seen in this area form two distinct groups, each enclosed within its own outer *prākāra*. Of these, the southern group is by far the more extensive and contains, within its limits, the modern Isurumuni and Vessagiri, together forming the ancient Issarasamaṇa-vihāra. The other group contains the ponds referred to above and has been identified with the park.

Isurumuniya is one of many shrines in and outside the ancient capital which have suffered from ignorant and unimaginative " restoration " and hideous " modernisation ". There is a gilded rock-cut image of the Buddha within the

sanctuary, and around and about it are scores and scores of smaller ones in varying sizes and of every conceivable material which represent the pious offerings of devotees and pilgrims down the ages.

On the terrace on which this Temple stands may be seen some notable examples of stone-carving in the panels. And by the edge of the pretty little Tank are executed elephants in both alto and bas-relief. The elephants, which are on the left hand side of the cleft, are in an unfinished state, but are nevertheless impressive by their quiet dignity and truth.

" This is no longer primitive art. On the other hand, it retains a simplicity which does not belong to the latest phase of Anurādhapura art. The elephant on the other side of the cleft is by a different artist, working in a flatter and more lively style. It would appear from what little work was done that the whole composition was meant to centre round the cleft. The student of Indian art will be reminded of the great bas-relief at Seven Pagodas representing the origin of the Ganges, where the central cleft represents the river. It is tempting to suppose that this unfinished composition was intended to be on the same lines as the finished work of Seven Pagodas ". (Paranavitana.)

The figure of a man and horse in the upper corner of the rock to the left is also of the Pallava period. Above the tank grows a Bo Tree, and on the platform, still higher, is a manufactured "Buddha's Footprint " in imitation of the celebrated one at Srīpādasthāna (Adam's Peak).

Vessagiriya

About half a mile further south of Isurumuniya lies its appurtenant, Vessagiriya. Here, amid three great groups of granite rocks, are mingled the remains of a monastery once of immense extent—a monastery the oldest part of which is coeval with Mihintalē and the dawn of Buddhism in the land

For, as we are told in the *Mahāvaṁsa*, Vessagiri-vihāra was "built in the place where 500 Vessas (*i.e.*, people of the third caste) dwelt after they had been ordained priests by Mahinda", the Apostle of Buddhism in Lankā.

Vessagiriya is one of the last great monasteries of Anurādhapura that were excavated completely in Bell's time, and the results of that excavation make it clear that all the three groups constituting what are known as the "Vessagiriya Rocks" and their surroundings were once thickly covered with buildings, representing the additions made down through the centuries from the time of King Devānampiya-tissa of the 3rd century before Christ. These buildings, together with the Rock-cells or boulder caves once inhabited by individual monks, originally formed a single Royal Monastery, that is, embracing both Isurumuniya and Vessagiriya, under the designation of "Issarasamaṇārāma".

The old-time Vessagiriya and its appurtenants was of vast extent. But in our time, owing to the fact that the high road was made to traverse the entourage of the ancient monastery on the west, an irrigation channel cut through it to the east, and all the land on either side sold outright to private holders who have long since converted it to paddy fields, the Crown Reservation for the Vessagiriya Ruins has dwindled to an area of about only 19 acres in all (measuring roughly 530 yards from north to south by 265 yards at widest from road to channel). Down the axis of this area lie the triple clusters of rocks, designated Rocks A., B. and C. respectively, for purposes of identification. And a few notes in regard to the more important or striking points on interest about them are given below.

Rock A

This is the most northerly group and is situated near the point of junction of the high road and the channel, consisting of about half a dozen close-lying boulders, the east and west

faces of which are almost vertical. Their total length is about 80 yards, with a maximum breadth of 30 yards. The work of excavation, begun and completed by Bell, has made it possible for a correct idea to be formed of the conformation of the several rooms, stairs, &c., which were laid out on this Rock.

" The boulders being of much the same height, it was only necessary for the architect of the buildings intended to crown them to have gaps and interstices joined up vertically by rubble courses, slightly laid back, so as to form with the rock an uninterrupted face on all sides except to the south. The depressions between the inner faces of the boulders were then filled in, and levelled up to the required height. Finally, by chiselling longitudinal grooves along the top of the boulders near their edges, " sets " were provided to take the foundations of the outer walls. The rocks being lower to their south end, substantial retaining walls, rising from the ground, were here essential in order to square up the whole into one compact, oblong structure with its axis from north to south ". (Bell.)

Ascent was possible to attain from either end ; but the main stairway occupied the middle of the south frontage. Of these projecting stairs, whilst only the two bottom steps remain, the chastely dressed stone slabs of its wing walls and of the revetment of the bay portico on to which it leads, are virtually as intact as when erected 15 centuries ago. Behind the portico lay a terrace, four square (30 feet each way) based on low rock running back to higher rock on the right, and to left, to the rubble revetment of the next terrace. In the middle of this terrace is a circular ruin, at the foot of whose lowest flight of steps on the brick pavement an unusual " find " was made during excavation—a small heap of " eldlings " or punch-marked coins, 70 in all, of which 68 were silver, 1 silvered copper and 1 copper. Of these, 13 were circular, the rest square or oblong.

Rock B

Between Rock A and Rock B there is a flat stretch of ground some 50 yards in width, wholly unoccupied by buildings. This space was kept quite open—for recreation probably.

Rock B, 50 yards south of Rock A, is made up of 4 or 5 boulders, close lying in line, united on the north to a long low hogback of bare rock which is dotted on its summit with smaller boulders and a few ruined sites. The whole Rock stretches lengthways for 180 yards. The boulders terminating Rock B on the north and those on its summit at the south provided cave shelters beneath their projecting brows.

In the area appertaining to Rock B is a ruin of a class of circular shrine which, except for one at Abhayagiriya and another at the Toluvila Monastery, may be said to be peculiar to Vessagiriya where half a dozen have come to light. Such round structures are of extreme rarity among the ruins of Anurādhapura. And since there are no remains of images, nor any indications of their former existence, in these circular based buildings, it is impossible even to guess what exactly was the form of worship for which they were set apart in their time.

In this area, too, are *inter alia* the ruins of a small Dāgäba, Vihāra and *Pilima-gē* (" image-house "). The debris of the rifled Dāgäba yielded a few moulded and ornamental bricks, some of which bear Sinhalese letters of the 10th–11th century. It is, therefore, certain that this Dāgäba was either built or restored at that period, probably by Mahinda IV. (975–991 A.D.)

The Vihāra must originally have been an exceptionally handsome shrine, rivalling the best of its class at other centres in Anurādhapura. But its very prominence and finish have been fatal to it. As Bell says: " Throughout the length and breadth of Anurādhapura it is doubtful whether any ruin has

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suffered such wanton destruction for utilitarian needs as is today exhibited by the almost complete despoiling of this erstwhile beautiful Vihāra. The few remnants of the moulded coping and gangway plinth, accidentally spared, testify to the former massiveness and bold lines of the shrine's basement. Now, merely the loose packing is to be seen, unmasked by revetment slabs of molded granite which have been appropriated wholesale by ruthless modern vandals . . . . The 'trail of the serpent' is on the broken pavement flag, but the delightful miniature stairs have fortunately escaped his 'slime'".

It was in reference to what was to be seen on and around Rock B that Mitton wrote of "the great boulders, tumbled at all angles, some so lightly poised that it looks as if a shower of rain-drops would over-balance them, and others firmly set, a growth of the mass itself. Amid these boulders, underneath their hanging eaves, nestling into their curved sides, are the cells, or caves, of individual monks. Each has been careful to cut a horizontal dripstone above his dwelling, so that the floods of rain water might not follow the curve inwards to his living-room; and across and above the drip-stone are queer-cut markings of a date more ancient than any inscriptions on slabs yet found. These are in the 'Brāhmi-lipi letter record' and have been deciphered. They tell of individual ownership in a community where most things were held in common".

Two of the caves here (Nos. 9 and 10) still bear traces of frescoes which once covered their faces, affording additional testimony to the period (5th century) when the Vessagiriya Monastery, highly favoured by the parricide King Kassapa (479–497 A.D.), is held to have been at the zenith of its importance. Though very greatly weathered, the rock wall of cave No. 9 shows the outline of a female figure (3 feet by 2 feet) painted in yellow with dashes of red here and there and a touch

of green. Seated, resting on her right palm with the right leg crossed horizontally, the lady has her left leg raised and knee bent, and (according to Bell) is emphasising an animated discourse by left arm half-outstretched and hand with open palm—a favourite attitude in Indian sculpture and painting. A smaller figure (2 feet by 1 foot 6 inches), with jewelled head-dress, armlets, &c., and coloured in red and yellow, is barely distinguishable on the worn plaster of cave No. 10. The delineation in these paintings exhibits equal spirit and level of art as the corresponding and more widely known Frescoes at Sigiriya, not impossibly executed by the same artists.

There are a number of ruins to west as well as east of Rock B. The most important of these may be said to be an isolated building, about a 100 yards directly east of the level area between Rocks B and C, standing within a small oasis of coconut garden in the midst of paddy land. The preservation of this solitary ruin, which is surmised to have been originally a *dānasālāva* (alms-hall), is due purely to its isolation and accidental position on non-irrigable land. All else of the Vessagiriya Monastery on the east lies beneath the soil of the extensive tract of rice-fields now stretching almost to the river (Malvatu-oya).

Rock C

Rock C, the furthest south, is the most picturesque of the three. Before mattock and axe combined to rob it of its beauty, says Bell, no more picturesque spot existed at Anurādhapura than this thickly wooded medley of rock and tumbled boulders, rising clear of the grass and mudland which surrounds it. Even today, as seen from the high road on the west, the site is not wanting in some of its pristine charm.

Unlike Rock B, this hummock is quite free of superimposed boulders. These lie round, and were for the most part joined

up to the main rock and to one another by banked terraces and cross walls on the west and south. They lie 70 yards beyond Rock B, and roughly cover an area of 140 yards by 80 yards. Between the high road and Rocks B and C are pillared ruins and a large *pokuṇa* partially cut in slab rock.

The summit of Rock C was reached by a staircase from a level area on its west. A part of the rock backbone here was once levelled by brickwork. There are even now signs of rooms at one point, besides mortice-holes for a railing and a channelette to drain off rain water. On the south side of Rock C, the work of excavation has laid bare the best preserved brick structure unearthed at this group of ruins. Presumably this was the old-time Priory, or chief *pansala* ("monks' residence"), of the Monastery at this Rock. In the open ground west of the southernmost boulders of this Rock are still to be seen, besides a large shallow *pokuṇa* ("pond"), the sites of three ruins. These are all that now remain of probably many buildings which studded this extensive arc.

The most interesting of all the caves in this group is to be found here, Cave No. 6, which was fairly spacious, averaging 22 feet in width by 17 feet in depth. In addition to the doorway, still marked by a granite beaded frame, two windows in the brickwork were provided. But for the fact that the stone lintel is cracked, the door-frame is as perfect as when erected, though the brick walls to either side of it have fallen away from it. This Cave, from its situation and other advantages, furnished a perfectly sheltered *pansala*. A Brāhmi letter record below the *kaṭāre* reads: *Parumaka Tisa puta Parumaka* (*Ku*)*maha lene* (*Girivaje*) *Sagasa*.

Of the ruins to east of the High Road, quite the most important in its way of the Vessagiriya ruins is an imposing *Pilima-gē*, immediately in front of a staircase of several flights which led to the summit of Rock B. But the full story of

monastic buildings appertaining to the Vessagiriya *Sanghārāma* on the west, however, will probably never be known. The steady spread of rice cultivation of late years has overwhelmed ground which would possibly have yielded much. But at least the extreme limits of the Monastery on this west side are still clearly defined.

It was shut in westward of Rocks A and B by the bund of Tisā-väva ; on the north-west it must have marched with the Isurumuniya Monastery, whilst its south-west confines were bounded by a *diya-agala* or " moat ", the course of which is still traceable in the existing depression skirting the modern cross road which unites the high road with the bund of Tisā-väva. This moat in former days ran on southward and delimited the area occupied by that portion of the *Sanghārāma* which embraced Rock C and its western environs. All the land to the west of the main road has for many years been asweddumised and is regularly cultivated for rice crops. The wonder is, therefore, that a single ruin should have survived on this side, and that the tract of mud land has not long ago swallowed every trace of buildings. Nevertheless, three ruins—a Vihāre and two *Piriven*—yet stand in the paddy fields, isolated but still above ground. These, from their relative positions, furnish a clue to the grouping of a portion at any rate of the Monastery buildings in this direction.

Vessagiriya in its day was a town by itself, a town of many levels and innumerable dwellings. Mitton's imaginative picture is fascinating. She says : " It needs more imagination than the average man possesses to reconstruct this rabbit-warren as it must have been in the time of its glory. But we might attempt it, peopling the cool shadows of the great rocks with the shaven, brown-faced men, noting the sudden precipices, falling from the thresholds of their habitations, the queer little steps cut from the face of the rock ; conjuring up the bird's eye they must have had of the beautiful

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buildings below, lying spread out like a draught-board between this group and the next, with the sunlight and shadow showing on the tiled roofs and paved courtyards and decorated entrances; and to complete the picture, it is necessary to imagine some of the saffron-clad monks flitting up and down and in and out like some strange species of giant moth, passing steadily barefoot along the terraces, over the little connecting bridges, and up and down the sun-baked slopes of the rocks, while around and about their groups of island homes the great jungle-covered plain billowed and rolled like a great ocean".

CHAPTER VI

THE OUTLYING MONASTERIES

1.—Toluvila Monastery

THE remains of nearly a hundred buildings in all, mostly *piriven* or monks' residences, including annexes, in varying stages of decay, constitute the ruins of the ancient monastery of Toluvila, lying beside the Railway Station at Anurādhapura, about one and a half miles south-east of the Town.

Nothing is known of the original designation of this important Monastery. But as Bell noted the fact more than fifty years ago, with that eagerness to make *Mahāvaṁsa* and similar nomenclature fit nameless sites *pari passu* with their excavation by the Archæological Survey, the "more advanced" Buddhists of Anurādhapura of his day sought to give the name of "Nivatta-ārāmaya" to the Toluvila Monastery, on the assumption, of course, that this is the identical "Nivatta-cetiya" (*i.e.*, "the turning-back *cētiya*") first built on the spot where the Apostle Mahinda, upon the invitation of King Devānampiya-tissa, turned back, near the Kadamba river, to enter the Mahamegha Park. The only inscriptions unearthed at this Monastery are a few letters here and there. These throw no light on its ancient name, but prove its continued existence as late as the 10th century or even later.

The tope is in a ruined condition, yet there seems little doubt that it was originally an elongated dome. Like the fortress walls at Sigiriya, the Temple was built of square hammered stones. All the work around it is of the "decorative period". On the west side a little annexe was built

against it with dressed stone not later than that period, showing that the central building is of earlier date. A guard-stone with a flower-vase carved on the front is an inheritance from the Amarāvati School (*i.e.*, the classical period). Toluvila was not moated. Possibly the channels that issue from Nuvara-väva and can still be traced on three sides took the place of the moat.

Of the structures within the northern quadrangle of the ruined area, the most boldly conceived is the *Piḷima-ge* or " Image House ", the internal arrangement of the *adytum* of which allowed of a great image of the Buddha, seated in the meditative attitude, being placed near the back wall, with a standing figure against either side wall.

This fine stone image, familiarly known today as the Toluvila Sedent Buddha and said to be the least damaged of all the colossal images yet discovered, is now in the Colombo Museum.

" The image is admittedly the finest yet brought to light at Anurādhapura. In mere size (5 ft. 9 in. high, across knees 5 ft. 9 in.), it yields in height to the seated Buddha on the Outer Circular road, which measures 7 ft. 6 in. But in other respects it surpasses all three statues of the Jetavanārāma ruins ". (Bell.)

2.—*Pankuliya Monastery*

Pankuliya, with its thirty odd ruins forming together a once compact Monastery, famous in its time, lies about three miles north of the Town of Anurādhapura, bordering the left bank of the Malvatu-oya. It is quite detached from the larger groups to west—Vijayārāma area with Kiribat Vehera, and to south the widespread cluster of Hindu Devāles known as the " Tamil Ruins ".

The buildings of this monastery worthy of special note are two Vihāras, the Dāgäba, a Bath-house and a once storeyed Nunnery.

The Dāgäba, after excavation, shows that its *maluva* or platform was 54 ft. four-square and 4 ft. 3 in. in height from the old ground-level to the stone flags of its pavement. The basement wall is of brick moulded on the ordinary lines, but with a broad frieze of elephant caryatides alternating with plain pilasters as supporters to a cornice now completely gone.

Vihāre No. 1 (Building No. 5) had the four cardinal entrances, and directly opposite each the *āsanaya* ("seat") of a seated image, arranged in cross fashion, projecting from an inner wall line, four-square like the building. The Vihāra was erected on 16 pillars of varied size, some rough, some dressed. And the shrine had originally four doorways, the southern one of which has a single line inscription in Tamil cut on the riser of its still. Outside the central room was left a passage for circumambulation (about 5 ft. in breadth). Here, ranged on the several *āsana* (seats) and pedestals with their backs to the wall, would be figures of Buddhas, seated or erect.

The Bath-house (Building No. 29) lies near the south wall. In dimensions, 45 ft. by 34 ft., its roof was supported on 48 stone pillars. At the centre was a shallow stone-bath (13½ ft. by 6 ft.) formed of slabs let into the floor, and close by a small dressing-room. A walled "compound" (36 ft. by 13 ft.), open to the sky, was attached to the building in front (west). Near the entrance was unearthed a fallen pillar, inscribed and dated in the second year of King "Abhā Salamevan Abhay" (Mahinda IV., 975–991 A.D.).

The Nunnery was an elongated storeyed building (110 ft. north and south by 32 in. breadth). The basement projects in recessed outline to form a portico at the middle of the east wall where is the only entrance, above a flight of 7 stone steps with plain moonstone at foot. These stairs are flanked by fine snake-hooded janitor terminals, on either side of which were figures in relief of squatting dwarfs, formed of brick on the

vertical face of the portico platform. A wide corridor ran the whole length of the building in front and gave access to 7 rooms exactly similar and side by side in one row.

At some period when Anurādhapura was temporarily held by Tamil rulers, this building was debased by incongruous surface ornamentation in stucco. A large number of grotesque heads and other portions of plaster figures, men and animals with arabesques, was recovered from the debris. The plan of the building obviously stamped it as intended to shelter a number of monks, or nuns, beneath the same roof in separate but adjoining cells. The pillar inscription of Mahinda IV. noted above refers to a Nunnery.

Vihāra No. 2 (Building No. 1) contained " the figure of a large sedent Buddha in limestone, fallen on its face " and " deeply buried " when first seen by the then Government Agent, Mr. R. W. Ievers, sixty years ago. Of this image Mr. Bell wrote in 1891 :

" The image proved to be much less damaged by the fall than had been feared. Though broken in two at the waist and bereft of both arms (fortunately found near), the upper portion of the body and the head are sound. As since raised and replaced with the hands fitted on, the figure is undoubtedly the finest of the large sedent Buddhas yet discovered at Anurādhapura. The classic features, simple expression and life-like attitude render this figure as represented in the act of blessing, a variation from the ubiquitous images with folded hands and meditative stare. It measures from hair top to left instep 6 ft. 9 in., across the knees 6 ft. Fragments of the chastely carved *āsanaya*, or ' seat ' of the image, were dug up around ".

The figure has since been permanently set on its renewed *āsanaya* within the shrine, and now offers one of the most taking and effective presentations of the seated Buddha to be met with anywhere in Ceylon.

3.—*Puliyankulama Monastery*

The ruins of Puliyankulam, or, to give it its full name, Baṇḍāra Puliyankulama—the ancient Pubbārāma—lie a mile eastward of the Malvatu-oya, in and across the fork formed by the junction of the Jaffna road ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Anurādhapura) and a road originally rightly described as " Mac Bride's Folly " (after the unlucky originator) but today euphemistically named " Mac Bride's Deviation ". The " Folly " or " Deviation ", which was intended to provide a short connection between the Kandy and Jaffna roads, was made across a part of the ancient Monastery, cutting off a substantial angle and thus destroying the symmetry of its plan.

In the old days the Baṇḍāra Puliyankulam Monastery was reached from Anurādhapura by the ancient road to Mihintalē, which ran from the Jētavanārāma Monasteries eastwards, crossing the Hālpānu-äla and Malvatu-oya bridges, and reaching the Monastery on the south. Today, all that is changed, thanks to Bell, whose magnificent finishing work was done towards making this well-planned Monastery, not only quicker and easier of access from the two thoroughfares which pass it, but also more open and attractive to the visitor.

To this end, forest trees were freely " parked ", the retaining wall of the quandrangle built afresh from its fallen slabs along half the north and the whole of the east side, the stone stylobate of the Dāgäba readjusted, the ground from north to east as far as the " Deviation " road cut down to its former level, and the revetments, &c., of the *Piḷima-gē* and *Piriven* to the north also reset.

The plan of Puliyankulam is square. The outer boundary of the square is a wall forming an oblong nearly square, with stone foundations of the novel double line type. Within this boundary is a square moat cut at the four principal points by causeways. In the centre of the square rises a

square platform of earth faced with gneiss and bearing three temples and one tope. On all sides of this platform are aligned small square buildings, doubtless dwelling quarters.

Inside the Monastery wall all the usual features are to be found, the dāgäba, *piḷima-gē*, vihāras, &c. " The walls of the platform are singularly perfect, and show with great clearness the curious method of the old stone-layers, who, instead of finishing each block rectangularly so that any one fitted any other one, worked one block to fit into another like a puzzle, thus saving themselves trouble in one way, but redoubling it in another ". (Mitton.) As Bell declared of " this excellently planned *Sanghārāma*, as in the case of its lesser counterpart at Vijayārāma, all was laid out with a mathematical precision worthy of unstinted admiration ".

The Jaffna road on the west separates the Monastery from an extensive, flattish mound covering some 2½ acres. And below the surface of this mound a strange and hitherto unrecorded series of structures was come upon—huge, mysterious, brick-lined pits, ill-shaped and mutually adjacent though wholly unconnected. In hazarding the opinion that all this represented an ancient Burial Mound, Bell, referring to these brick-lined pits, said :

" Manifestly they are of great age. They were not the dwellings of troglodytes ; they can hardly have been brick or lime kilns, from their general unsuitability for such use ; nor granaries ; nor refuse bins of the ancient city's scavengers. The most reasonable theory at present, without further light, would seem to be that this gravelly mound or hillock, across the Malvatu-oya (which flows not far distant), was one of the *susāna*, or " cemeteries," of early Anurādhapura, and the brick ' cists ' the actual receptacles for cinerary inhumation ". Bell was cautious to add, however, in a footnote, that this was " a provisional supposition, which may possibly be disproved by further investigation ".

Puliyankulam, that is, the ancient Pubbārāma, was a branch of the Abhayagiri where Mahāyānism was strong. Two weathered slabs found in Puliyankulam were both dated in the reign of King Abhā-salamevan, who may either be Kassapa V. or Dappula V. One of these registers a benefaction made, among other things, for the daily supply of rice to a person who had daily to perform something connected with the Dhammadhātu (Sin. *daham-daya*). Says Dr. Paranavitana in this connection :

" The text here is incompletely preserved. It is possible that what he had to do was the daily recitation of the Dhammadhātu. The other record, too, has the word *daham-daya*, but the text is even more fragmentary than the first. We have already mantioned that a *Vaipulya Sūtra* (Mahayāna text) of this name was brought to Ceylon in the reign of Silākala and that it was accorded special honours in the Royal Palace as well as in the Jetavana Monastery. There is little doubt that the reference in these two records is to the Mahāyāna text of that name ; and it follows that the inmates of the Pubbārāma (*i.e.*, Puliyankulam) Monastery, in the 10th century, honoured Mahāyāna doctrines. This is not surprising, as we learn from another slab inscription from the same place that the Pubbārāma was connected with the Abhayagiri fraternity, the members of which were noted for their heteredox leanings ".

4.—Vijayarama Monastery

What is today known as the " Vijayārāma ",—its olden name is unknown—an isolated monastery of ancient Anurādhapura lying about 2½ miles north of the Town, may be regarded as the typical Sanghārāma or Buddhist establishment, perfect in itself, with its shrines and meeting hall, its priestly residences, bath-house, store-rooms, ponds, &c.

Broadly speaking, the Monastery consisted of a raised quadrangle (288 feet north and south by 268 feet east and west) walled, with entrances at the four cardinal points, enclosing a Dāgäba and three Vihāras, with an open Hall on the north. Outside was first a walk, then 12 evenly grouped annexes surrounded by a moat, with the chief *pansala*, a bathing-house and a few other buildings on the south and west. The whole covered an area of 12½ acres, bounded by a quadrangular outer wall of stone (200 by 300 yards), traces of which may still be seen. From the lodge a broad street led straight to the inner quadrangle.

Down this street, on the right, is an oblong building of 48 pillars, which was probably the chief *pansala* or monks' residence. Almost opposite to the *pansala*, with an array of 48 rough-hewn pillars, is a large ruin which was undoubtedly once a hot-water bath-room. The arrangement of the room leaves no doubt as to its purpose. Exactly in its centre are stone slabs forming a large oblong bath, and hard by were unearthed a fire-place, charcoal and ashes. There was also a low platform of brick-work (5 feet square), which Bell held to be was the base of the hearth used for heating the chatties of water intended for the ablution of the clay-bedaubed monks.

Semi-circular moonstones and fine flanking stones carved with single obese dwarf are to be seen at the foot of the entrance stairs at the south and west porches. Below the floor of each of the four porches was found a brick-built cella, containing a bronze figure of a double-faced god, an animal and three small clay saucer lamps. The east porch held an elephant, the south a horse, the north a lion, the west a bull. The figures probably represented the four Guardian Gods.

Connected with the north porch is a great hypethral hall, pillarless and unroofed, which was probably intended for refection or exercise and of which Bell wrote: "The bold

lines of the moulding from basement plinth to the choice coping which crowns the wall slabs would alone mark out this structure as worthy a high place among the architectural remains of the ancient city. But it is to the bas-reliefs on its walls that the Hall owes its chief distinction. In this respect it stands unrivalled ".

This was the same " preaching-hall of an exceedingly beautiful design " which Mitton described as having " attracted men from far ". The most attractive features of this fine piece of work are the carved stones decorating the exterior wall of the platform. These are panels differing from each other, some containing only a single made figure and others a male and female. They stand beneath a carved canopy of curious *Makara*-pattern. These bloated dragon-beasts face each other open-mouthed, each with a figure, sometimes human, sometimes animal, in their jaws. In the hollows of their backs are quaint dwarfs. The *Makaras*, with their curved backs and fish-like tails, here much more resemble dolphins than crocodiles. Besides these there are striking gargoyles and bits of floral decoration falling vertically " The impression made by this careful and artistic work. here, far out in the jungle, visited by comparatively few, was heightened by the gleams of light which, falling through the trees, struck, as if of set purpose, on the carvings, bringing out the delicate chiselling against a background of shadows ". (Mitton.)

The Dāgäba here, like so many others in the ancient capital has been broken into by treasure seekers, and the relic-chambers wholly gutted. In clearing away the *débris* which concealed the Dāgäba pavement, a most interesting and, from the point of view of information, most valuable find was made. About a dozen tiny plaques of copper were unearthed, doubtless forming part of the original contents of this relic-chamber.

These plaques, according to Dr. Paranavitana, contain invitations to the goddess Tārā, the Bōdhisattvas Avalōkitēsvara (Mahākarunā) and Ākāsagarbha and the Buddhas Sikin and Gaganabuddha (? the Mahayāna Bōdhisattva named Gaganaganja) and abond in mystic syllables like *Om*, *Kili kili*, *huru huru*, *svāhā*, &c. They represent a very advanced stage of the Tantric cult and afford evidence that in the 9th century—to which period the plaques belong—Mahāyāna gods and goddesses were objects of popular adoration ".

If anything more were needed to confirm the fact that Vijayārāma was definitely Mahayānist, it is to be found in the representations in low relief of a four-armed deity attended by a female figure on the plinth of the main building at this monastery. " The deity does not hold any attributes in his hands ; but it is probable that these details were originally worked in stucco and have since fallen off. It is not possible to say definitely what this deity is, but there is one detail which seems to give a clue . . . . The deity holds down one of his hands in the bestowing attitude, and below is the crouching figure of a ghost (*preta*) with upturned face and one of the hands uplifted, evidently to receive the ambrosia which flows from the fingers of the deity. As this is a characteristic mark of Avalokita, we may identify this figure with that Bōdhisattva and the female by his side with his consort. This identification becomes all the more probable when we consider that copper plaques (referred to above) inscribed with invocations to Avalokita and Tārā have been found at the place ". (Paranavitana.)

5—*Kiribat Dagaba*

Half a mile north-east of Vijayārāma is an ancient Dāgäba —one of the oldest of the large Dāgäbas of Anurādhapura— which is today propularly called " Kiribat Vehera ", a name which is obviously a modern ill-suited corruption of

" Kiri Vehera ", a name by which one of the large Dāgäbas at Polonnaruva is at present known. As in the case of the Vijayārāma, there is no record of its ancient name. Bell said it was tempting, but perhaps rash, to identify this Dāgäba with the " Pathama Cētiya ", the first Dāgäba to be erected in Ceylon, in Devānampiyatissa's time, in the neighbourhood of the ancient high-road to the Cetiya mountain.

This Dāgäba, which had been rifled probably by Tamil and other invaders many centuries ago, is now hardly more than 30 feet in height. Its approximate circumference is some 425 feet (about 140 yards), which makes it smaller than the Mirisavätiya Dāgäba. And it was built entirely of brick, with no stonework altars, or " screens ", at the cardinal points, differing in this respect essentially from the other large Dāgäbas.

Excavation here produced, at a depth of 25 feet, some crystalline stones, said to be of no intrinsic value but interesting as geological specimens, with a few nicely cut beads laid between a layer of baked and unbaked bricks. These stones and beads are now in the Colombo Museum. A few coins—Buddhist, Pallavar and Kurumbar types—were also unearthed at various depths.

But for a solitary pillar bearing an inscription of the 10th century, the only other relic connected with " Kiribat Vehera " hitherto discovered is a *Piḷima-gē* (" image-house ") on four tall squared pillars, which once supported a roof over a large standing figure of the Buddḥa, which was found lying fallen on its face. When erect, it stood quite 12 feet above the floor. What is left of it now is but 9 feet of feetless trunk, cracked and disintegrated, but the head and face are unbroken. Bell was of the view that this massive figure must have been deliberately overthrown headlong from its pedestal by those vandals whose tribe is not yet extinct—the insensate and ruthless treasure-seekers.

6.—Pacinatissa-pabbata Vihara

Up to less than a decade ago, nothing was known about the identity or history of the moated site which adjoins the Anurādhapura-Trincomalee road, a little beyond the high-level sluice of the Nuvara-väva. Popular fancy till then had labelled it the " Palace of Prince Sāliya ", but as in the case of the Outer Circular Road " Palaces ", it is usually the case that the term " Palace " is nowadays applied to almost every mysterious ruin of which the religious character is not obvious to the villager.

The discovery in 1940, however, of a 5th century inscription on the landing slab of a flight of steps belonging to a near-by ruined structure, of which nothing else was then visible above the ground, and the reference therein to " Pajina-tisa-pava-vihāra " have helped at long last to settle a question the answer to which remained hidden for nearly 1,700 years. Dr. Paranavitana, the present Archæological Commissioner, who made this important discovery, has identified the site as being connected with the Monastery of that name founded by Jeṭṭhatissa I. (*circa* 263–273 A.D.), the elder brother of the famous Mahāsēna. And the results of the excavation work he has since carried out on this site are not only of considerable archæological interest, but are also of real value for a study of the evolution of religion, art and architecture in this Island.

Briefly, the excavations revealed that the Monastery of Pācīnatissa pabbata Vihāra was planned on the same lines as those three other outlying Vihāras of ancient Anurāḍhapura already dealt with in this chapter, namely Puliyankulama, Toluvila and Vijayārāma, one material difference being that the Pācīnatissa-pabbata contains buildings of the most archaic character, while many architectural features, which are of stone at the other three sites, are of brick here. The excavations here also brought to light, between the pilasters of the retaining wall of the Quadrangle, the same kind of

elephant figures as are found at the retaining wall of the Ruvanväli-sāya platform, thus providing another instance of the *hatthi-pākāra*—the oldest specimen of this architectural feature so far known anywhere in Ceylon.

There are two peculiarities to be noticed in the remains on this site. At the corners of the Quadrangle as well as at those of the four shrines thereon and the cells for monks, have been planted short octagonal pillars, with rounded top similar in design to the *āyaka* pillars of Ándhra stūpas and the Yūpas of Ceylon Dāgäbas, but smaller. Each building was therefore enclosed by four of these short octagonal shafts. Of these Dr. Paranavithana says :

" They obviously served no architectural purpose which we can conceive of. Probably there was some religious or magical significance attached to these pillars, the nature of which we are not in a position to ascertain to day.

" The disposition of the Moonstone at the foot of the flight of steps in some of the buildings here is also peculiar. As a rule the Moonstone in Anurādhapura buildings project out from a line formed by the face of the guardstones and the last riser in the flight of steps. Here, the outer extremities of the Moonstone are in line with the face of the guardstones on either side of it. The arrangement here is not so artistic as the one which is universally found at other sites in Anurādhapura and elsewhere, and it may therefore be surmised that the buildings here represent an archaic style which was abandoned after a better and aesthetically more appealing style had been evolved at a later date ".

The debris here yielded, in considerable numbers, specimens of architectural ornaments in terra-cotta, such as ornamental bricks, miniature balustrades, rosettes and *āmalakas*. The numismatic finds included a mediaeval gold *aka* and a copper coin with the legend read as *Śri Laṃkesvara*, with traces of gilding.

Maps of Anurādhapura showing sites of archæological and historical interest can be obtained separately.

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